



The best practice autism program at the intersection of hope and innovation.

2026 PRESS KIT



OUR 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:

Turning Pointe is a welcoming community inspired by family, grounded in best-practice care, and continually evolving to meet the needs of individuals with autism and their support community.

OUR PROGRAMS:

We offer programs that address a lifelong continuum of needs, from preschool through adulthood. Programs include individualized, interdisciplinary therapeutic preschool and day schools; adult skills and employment programs; and social engagement opportunities.

Whether a family is newly diagnosed, navigating school challenges, or facing the transition into adulthood, Turning Pointe offers guidance, continuity, and community every step of the way. Research Focus: As an experienced autism learning facility, Turning Pointe conducts and publishes behavioral research in partnership with university affiliated expert Practice Advisory Board. Our commitment to best practices and evidence-informed programs enables us to advance autism research and immediately integrate cutting-edge findings into our daily work.

COMMUNITY TRAININGS:

Turning Pointe shifts mindsets around autism by actively engaging the community. We offer first responder training, employer webinars, and school special education and classroom training to educate and equip professionals to work with autistic individuals.

Turning Pointe is reimagining lifelong autism support – integrated, dignified, and grounded in both compassion and evidence.



SCHOOLS



ADULT SERVICES



TRAINING & SUPPORT



PRODUCT STORE



FAMILY RESOURCES



TURNING POINTE AUTISM FOUNDATION HISTORY

Our story begins with a child named Jack. Diagnosed with autism in 2005, Jack's parents, Kim and Randy Wolf, struggled to find the right therapies to support their son. After a nationwide search, the Wolfs brought together leading experts to create an individualized, interdisciplinary at-home program.

Jack's progress was transformative. The customized, interdisciplinary model of care they established in a home setting would eventually serve as the basis for Turning Pointe's approach. Determined to share these life-changing interventions with others, the Wolfs united volunteers, experts, and the local community to establish Turning Pointe Autism Foundation in 2007.

The foundation has expanded from its humble beginnings with a few students into a much larger Naperville campus led by a team of clinical experts, serving more than 120 individuals, 500 families, and training thousands of first responders. We are dedicated to creating best-practice learning environments that foster independence, improve communication, encourage socially appropriate behaviors, and address the lifelong continuum of needs for individuals on the autism spectrum.

And Jack? He is also thriving. He is now a young adult, avid recreational skier, and works part-time pressing shirts and packing coffee and pumpkin kits with friends at Turning Pointe.

Thanks to the generosity of families, volunteers, donors, and community leaders, we are reimagining lifelong autism support.



Established: 2007

Website: www.turningpointeautismfoundation.org

Address: 1500 West Ogden Avenue, Naperville, IL 60540

Phone: (630) 570-7948

Email: contactus@turningpointeaf.org

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION:

As a 501 ©(3) nonprofit organization, Turning Pointe Autism Foundation walks alongside individuals and families as they navigate the lifelong autism journey together. Turning Pointe strives to raise the standard of educational, therapeutic, social engagement, and employment supports for children, teens, and adults with autism. Its success derives from strong partnerships with leading autism research experts, Illinois school districts, employment training partners, donors, and volunteers – all working together to build a thriving, inclusive future for individuals with autism.

OUR CAMPUS:

The Turning Pointe Autism Foundation campus in Naperville, Illinois, is accessible and sensory-friendly, designed specifically for children and adult autism learners. The 34,000 sq. foot main building includes children, youth, and adult classrooms; day programs; a world-class occupational therapy gym; and social meeting spaces. In 2026, Turning Pointe will begin construction of a brand-new adult services building designed specifically for adults with autism.



EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP:

Our leadership team brings decades of expertise in special education, therapeutic interventions, nonprofit management, and evidence-based practice.



CARRIE PROVENZALE

Executive Director

Partnering with the Board of Directors and clinical team, Carrie leads the strategic vision and operational leadership for Turning Pointe. Since 2011, she has served the mission as a consultant, volunteer board member, and Executive Director for a decade.



BIANCA FROST, M.A., BCBA, CAS

Associate Director

A published behavior analyst, Bianca leads autism education innovation and research. She co-leads research with NIU, was a trained BlinkLab facilitator (a pre-FDA study using AI for early autism screening). She is ADOS- and NMRT-certified to train first responders and educators.



MARY BUTLER

Family and Child Life Specialist

Mary combines clinical expertise and community leadership to build transformative programs for autism families. Recipient of The Arc of Illinois Leadership Award (2025), she leads Turning Pointe's adult services, family support, and first responder training, including Naperville's Blue Envelope initiative.



FOCUS AREAS:

Turning Pointe Autism programs address the lifelong continuum of needs from preschool to young adults. Whether a family is newly diagnosed, navigating school challenges, or facing the transition into adulthood, Turning Pointe offers guidance, continuity, and community every step of the way.

Children and Youth

Specialized educational environments for learners with autism. Students work with an interdisciplinary team that provides intensive individual attention, appropriate educational accommodations, and evidence-based therapeutic interventions, including ABA, occupational, physical, and speech therapy.

Programs include:

- Autism Screenings - to launch April 2026
- Turning Pointe Preschool/Kinder* - a therapeutic early childhood program
- Turning Pointe Day School* - a therapeutic day school for 50 children (ages 5-22)
- Post-Secondary Transition Programs
- Sibling Support Groups

* All day and preschool students are referred from local school districts - not open admission



Adults

Turning Pointe offers meaningful opportunities that support independence, connection, and purpose beyond secondary education. These programs support individuals as they build adult identities, relationships, and pathways for a fulfilling life.

Skill Building and Employment Programs:

- Compass Adult Day Program - respite and supported employment opportunities for post-secondary students, comprehensive clinical support to boost communication, functional living, and behavioral skills.
- Employment Training Program (ETP) - employability skills training with local employer partnerships in the community. Focusing on self-advocacy, networking, and problem-solving capabilities.
- Adult Enterprise Work Opportunities - on-site employment opportunities to adults with autism via enterprise programs and partnerships.



Adults (Cont.)

Social and Recreational Programs:

Practical support, social connection and recreation opportunities, and resource navigation

- Social Group Hangouts - Evening hangouts for teens and adults to foster real social connection via fun game and creative nights, field trips, and speakers.
- CREW - A Community, Recreation, Engagement, and Well-being day program for young adults. Offers fun, inclusive, peer recreational activities, such as yoga, art and cooking.

Community

Turning Pointe works collaboratively with autism families, individuals, and the wider community to provide education, resource navigation, social engagement opportunities, and training. Thriving individuals are supported by informed, inclusive communities.

Community Autism Training Programs include:

- Training and consultation for employers seeking to better support autistic employees
- Professional learning for schools
- Autism-informed training for law enforcement and first responders

Family Community Programs include:

- **Parent Education Workshops** - Ongoing support, education, and resource navigation for newly diagnosed families and experienced caregivers.
- **Sibling Support** - Autism affects the entire family. Sibling groups offer safe spaces to share the challenges and joys of having a loved one with autism.

In 2026, Turning Pointe will begin construction of a brand-new adult services building designed specifically for adults with autism.

Annual Community Events:

- Pumpkin Race (October, Naperville, Rotary Hill Park)
- Autism Open House (Turning Pointe Autism Foundation, Naperville)
- Morton Arboretum Sensory Friendly Event (Date coming soon. Lisle, IL)

Annual Fundraising Events:

- First Look for Charity, Chicago Auto Show (February)
- Golf Outing and Ladies Brunch and Browse (July 13, 2026)

Research

As an experienced autism learning facility, Turning Pointe conducts and publishes behavioral research in partnership with university-affiliated expert Practice Advisory Board. The commitment to best practices and evidence-informed programs enables Turning Pointe to advance autism research and integrate cutting-edge findings into daily work immediately.



1. ADVANCING AUTISM EDUCATION THROUGH RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION

Turning Pointe bridges classroom expertise with evidence-based research

Partnering with institutions like Northern Illinois University and companies such as Blink Labs, Turning Pointe studies critical questions—from teacher-student ratios to effective therapeutic strategies to developing AI software to boost early autism detection. Findings guide classroom practices, improve student independence, and inform educators, families, and policymakers through workshops and presentations, demonstrating how research and collaboration drive real progress in autism education.

2. FROM FAMILY DETERMINATION TO COMMUNITY IMPACT

Turning Pointe Autism Foundation supports students and families across Chicagoland

Founded in 2007 by Kim and Randy Wolf in Naperville, Turning Pointe has grown into a nonprofit providing specialized education, therapy, and career readiness for children and young adults with autism. As autism diagnoses rise—now 1 in 31 U.S. children, according to the CDC—Turning Pointe meets the need with programs guiding students from diagnosis to independence, while empowering families through community partnerships.

3. IMPROVING SAFETY THROUGH UNDERSTANDING: TURNING POINTE TRAINS FIRST RESPONDERS ON AUTISM AWARENESS

Successful program makes an impact and bridges gap

Misunderstandings during emergencies can have serious consequences for individuals with autism. Turning Pointe Autism Foundation's First Responder Program prepares first responders with the knowledge and strategies needed to support individuals on the spectrum during high-stress situations. The customizable training addresses communication, behavioral responses, and crisis scenarios, strengthening trust between first responders and the communities they serve.



4. TURNING POINTE HELPS STUDENTS BUILD INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENCE

Turning Pointe Day School prepares students for life beyond the classroom

Turning Pointe's Day School in Naperville serves students whose needs aren't fully met by local districts. Through personalized, research-based plans, students gain academic skills alongside communication, social, and functional life skills. Vocational training and transition planning begin early, ensuring students develop confidence and independence, supported by families and educators every step of the way.

5. CLOSING THE AUTISM EMPLOYMENT GAP

Turning Pointe creates career pathways for young adults with autism

Despite high capability, 70–90% of autistic adults remain unemployed. More than half of young adults with autism never work for pay after leaving high school, and nearly 99% don't receive the job training services they need. These statistics underscore a stark reality: talent is being overlooked, and opportunities are being lost. Turning Pointe's Employment Training Program equips young adults with practical job skills and connects them with Chicagoland employers. Through training, coaching, and partnerships, the nonprofit helps graduates gain skills to enter the workforce and also provides on-site work opportunities with enterprise businesses.



1. Can you share the history of Turning Pointe Autism Foundation and what inspired its founding?
2. Can you describe your key programs that support both children and adults with autism?
3. How does Turning Pointe measure program success? Could you share a recent example of its impact?
4. How are best practices integrated into daily instruction, and how do teacher-student ratios influence outcomes?
5. Why does Turning Pointe prioritize and invest in behavioral research? How have partnerships—such as with Northern Illinois University—enhanced research, program development, or student results?
6. How do Turning Pointe’s community training programs help first responders, employers, or schools better understand autism and how to support individuals with autism?
7. How can businesses, employees, or community members get involved to support your mission?
8. What is a common misconception about autism you wish more people understood?
9. What upcoming initiatives or projects are you most excited about?
10. Where can people learn more about Turning Pointe and its programs?