



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senator Nozzolio, Dr. Temple Grandin and Happiness House Work to Promote Autism Awareness, Education and Support Services

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO October 1, 2015



Senator Michael Nozzolio recently spoke at the Happiness House conference in Geneva where he welcomed and held an open discussion with world-renowned autism advocate, Dr. Temple Grandin. Dr. Grandin, who was diagnosed with autism at age two, is a prominent autism awareness and research advocate. Dr. Grandin and Senator Nozzolio discussed their shared belief that early intervention improves the intellectual ability in autistic children, and she recognized Senator Nozzolio for his commitment and dedication to providing assistance and services to those affected by autism.

“Recognizing that early intervention is paramount to individuals on the autism spectrum, it was a pleasure to hear Dr. Grandin speak on the innovations in the field of autism,” said Senator Nozzolio. “A diagnosis of autism affects not only the child but the entire family. Families coping with autism need all the support, care and knowledge that we can provide. With continued guidance from autism pioneers like Dr. Grandin, and providers like Happiness House, we can work together to help individuals with autism,” concluded Senator Nozzolio.

As a child, Dr. Grandin was exposed to a rigid structure, and although she did not speak until age four, extensive speech therapy aided in her communicative abilities. Despite her difficulties, Dr. Grandin achieved considerable academic success. She graduated from Hampshire Country School, a boarding school for gifted children in Rindge, New Hampshire, and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in psychology from Franklin Pierce College, a master's degree in animal science from Arizona State University, and a doctoral degree in animal science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Grandin is also the inventor of the “hug box” which is a deep-pressure device designed to calm hypersensitive persons, usually those with autism spectrum disorders. The device provides sensory relief, without over stimulation, to those with autism and autism-spectrum disorders.

Senator Nozzolio has been a strong advocate for individuals and families living with autism and has hosted numerous events to raise awareness of the issue and to provide information about services available for families dealing with autism. Senator Nozzolio secured the funding needed to establish the Happiness House Autism Evaluation Center, which provides families with comprehensive diagnosis and treatment options in the Finger Lakes region. Additionally, Senator Nozzolio co-sponsored and successfully fought to enact legislation requiring accident and health insurance companies to provide coverage for screening, diagnosis and treatment for patients on the autism spectrum.

*Pictured from left to right: Cheryl Schaefer-Coppola, Senator Mike Nozzolio,
Dr. Temple Grandin and Mary Boatfield*