



The Autism Society of Greater Cleveland

First Word.....September, 2008

We had a great meeting and a fabulous turnout on August 5th. Thomas Brown was our guest. He is a writer-director and Broken Toy Anti Bullying Project Founder. He is in the process of producing two new films involving the bullying of autistic children in Port Clinton, Ohio. His years of dedication and experience to anti- school violence and bullying proved to be very informative and beneficial to our members.

For our September meeting we are very fortunate to have as a guest speaker Kim Gustely. She is the Co-director of Victory Gallop, a Therapy Riding Center in Bath, Ohio. We hope you will join us on September 2nd at 6:30 PM at The Cuyahoga Valley Career Center in Brecksville, Ohio. As a courtesy to our members, we provide free Child Care thru Steps Behavioral Consultants. In order to have enough staff on hand to care for the children, we are requesting that you RSVP for Child Care at least 7 days prior to the meeting by calling (216) 556-4937 or e-mail at support@asgc.org.

We look forward to many fabulous speakers for the remainder of 2008 and we hope that you will take advantage of their wealth of experience .

The ASGC is forming a team to walk with our friends at Autism Speaks on September 28, 2008, at Progressive Field in support of Autism Awareness. If you would like to join the ASGC team for this 2 mile walk, please call (216) 556-4937 by September 1, 2008.

We wish to thank our friends at the ASA and the management of Ridge Park Square Theatre for sponsoring a Sensory Free Movie on Saturday, August 23, 2008. This event is being sponsored throughout the country and allows those affected by autism spectrum disorders to enjoy movie viewing that might not otherwise be possible

We are in the process of developing a resource guide for our members for all available providers in the NE Ohio region who deal with Autism Spectrum Disorders. If you have any professional providers that you feel should be included in the directory, please e-mail the information to support@asgc.org.

We continue to strive, everyday, to be the go-to source for information and your leader in advocacy in the Cleveland area. Thanks to all of you for your continued support.

Eileen Hawkins—Administrator ASGC

Eileen Hawkins—Administrator
(216) 556-4937
Monday—Friday 9AM– 4 PM

Autism Society of Greater Cleveland

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P.O. Box 41066
Brecksville, Ohio 44141

The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. The Autism Society of Greater Cleveland does not endorse any specific product, method of therapy or organization. Our aim is to provide information that assists our membership in making educated decisions. Thank you.



Autism's Social Struggles Due to Disrupted Communication Networks in Brain, Carnegie Mellon Study Says

By: Carin Yavorcik



New research from Carnegie Mellon University sheds light on the neural mechanisms that are responsible for social difficulties associated with autism, and on the workings of these social brain mechanisms.

According to the study, published in the journal *Social Neuroscience*, inefficient pathways for transmitting information between certain brain regions are to blame. The research implicates abnormalities in the brain's inter-regional communication system, which connects the gray matter's computing centers.

The study is the first to measure the synchronization between the brain areas that make up the Theory of Mind network, which is responsible for processing the intentions and thoughts of others. It is also the first to provide such concrete evidence of faulty social network connections.

Researchers asked 12 high-functioning adults with autism and 12 control participants to view animations of interacting geometric figures. Participants then were asked to select the word from several choices that best described the interaction. For example, a large triangle would nudge a small triangle to move outside its enclosure, and the correct word choice would be "persuading." The control subjects were consistently better at inferring the intention from the action than the participants with autism.

The findings have the potential to guide the development of theoretically based interventions for autism that could target this particular shortfall; for example, by focusing on games and activities that would strengthen the connections.



Autism Society of America.
improving the lives of all affected by autism

Join the Autism Society of Greater Cleveland!

Dues for the Autism Society of Greater Cleveland are **only \$5.00** per year.

Checks for dues or donations can be sent to:

ASGC

P.O. Box 41066

Brecksville, Ohio 44141

(216) 556-4937

Check out our website at www.asgc.org!

Join us for our Meetings September 2nd & October 7th & November 11th.

**All are welcome to the monthly
ASGC Meeting**

When: 1st Tuesday of each month

Time: 6:30pm to 8:30 pm

Where: Cuyahoga Valley Career Center,
8001 Brecksville Rd. in Brecksville, 44141

**Please note our November meeting is the
2nd Tuesday of the month due to election
day.**

support@asgc.org

**Free Childcare is Available for
ASGC Meetings**

- *Provided by staff members from
STEPS Behavioral Consulting*

**RSVP is Required for Free
Childcare at least 7 days
prior to meeting date.**

(216) 556-4937



Upcoming Meetings

Meetings are held at 8001 Brecksville Rd., Brecksville, Ohio 44141

September 2nd 6:30-8:30 PM Speaker — Kim Gustely, Co-Director of Victory Gallop a Therapy Riding Center in Bath, Ohio.

October 7th 6:30-8:30 PM Speaker—Christina H. Ren, L.I.S.W. of Psychological & Behavioral Consultants. Topic—"Preventing Meltdowns"

November 11th 6:30-8:30 Speaker Judith C. Saltzman, Atty. At Law

Topic New ODE Regulation Changes

Please join us!

DIRECTIONS TO THE CUYAHOGA VAL-
LEY CAREER CENTER

<http://www.asgc.org/events.htm>



Register NOW for the 2008 NATTAP Conference November 19-21, 2008

The Autism Society of America (ASA) and Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) present the 2nd annual international conference on autism training and technical assistance. The objectives of the conference are to review current systems models for addressing the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), promote use of best practice in research and intervention and provide methods for capacity building – all of which contribute to the ultimate goal of improving outcomes for individuals ages 3-21. Join the estimated 1,500-2,000 attendees from across the national and around the globe.



NEW for 2008! Pre-Conference Sessions - November 18, 2008

Pre-Conference sessions are provided by leaders and recognized experts in the field and provide attendees with a valuable opportunity for in-depth discussion and learning.



What: 2008 NATTAP Conference

When: **November 19-21, 2008**

Where: Greater Columbus Convention Center | Columbus, OH

Early Bird Rate: \$185

Parent/Family Member Rate: \$100

Pre-Conference Session Rate: \$100

Conference registration and information available at: <http://www.nattapconference.org>

The Autism Society of Ohio has provided a grant to OCALI reducing the registration rate for parents from last year's \$185 to \$100 for all three days of the conference!



Did you know:

- *1 to 1.5 million Americans have autism*
- *1 child in 150 births will be diagnosed with autism, the fastest-growing developmental disability with 10-17% annual growth*
- *In ten years, the expected annual cost of autism will be \$200-\$400 billion*

--Source: [Autism Society of America](http://www.autismspeaks.org)



The **2nd annual NATTAP Conference** will gather educators, service providers and parents from across the United States and from around the globe. The 2008 NATTAP Conference will provide a forum for the continued exchange of ideas and promising practices that will provide common solutions to the common problems in ASD. **Register NOW by going to <http://www.nattapconference.org>.**



Educational Films to be Produced in Port Clinton



The ASGC had the pleasure of hosting Thomas Brown, writer, director and Broken Toy Anti Bullying Founder as a guest speaker at our August 5th meeting. He was gracious enough to share his expertise and strategies on addressing and dealing with the widespread school bullying problem that many of our children are faced with. He will produce two new films in Port Clinton, Ohio. First up will be “Ant Boy”, in which five kids on a summer field trip learn about fairness and understanding after being caught belittling an autistic child. The second film, “Silent Hero” tells the story of a tormented autistic boy and how one act of bravery changes the life of his antagonist. It is Brown’s goal that the films will both enlighten children about autism and the importance of treating everyone, even those who are different or misunderstood, with fairness and understanding.

Brown is known to many educators in the United States, Canada and in the United Kingdom, Japan and Australia for his dramatic anti-bullying films like “Broken Toy”, “Scars”, “But Names Will Never Hurt Me”, “Joey”, “The Power of One”, “Tears on the Highway” and several others. In addition to creating educational films and an authorized documentary that commemorated the 25th anniversary of “Night of the Living Dead”, Brown has traveled the country for going on two decades speaking about the problem of school bullying to students and adults.

“Ant-Boy” and “Silent Hero” will get underway with a pre-production in late August. In addition to producing these films, Brown will also present a special community anti-bullying awareness program in the fall.

Mr. Brown’s presentation was very interesting and helpful to our members. We sincerely thank him for his kindness and time spent with the ASGC.

Do you have some news or information to share?
Send information by email to Hawkins_eileen@hotmail.com by the 1st of each month. for the following month’s letter.



Easter Seals, ASA and AUCD Present for State Legislators



ASA presented in conjunction with Easter Seals and the Association of University centers on Disabilities in New Orleans last week at the National Conference of State Legislatures. The session, entitled “Federal and State Public Policy Activities in Autism,” included Cathy Pratt, ASA Board of Directors chair and director of the Indiana Resource Center for Autism, Katy Beh Neas and Denise Rozell of Easter Seals, Kim Musheno of AUCD and moderator Maria Blanco of the Louisiana University Center for Excellence. It was attended by state legislators nationwide.

The presentation gave an overview of current policies concerning autism from the federal government and the state governments, as well as general information about autism and the realities faced by families and communities. For more information about the National Conference of State Legislatures, visit <http://www.ncls.org/>.

WeAreAutism.org,

WeAreAutism.org the place for people living with autism, is the newest social support network from WeAre.US platform—the leading platform of medical social support networks.

WeAreAutism.org offers much of the same capability set as larger social networks like MySpace and Facebook, but within a safe environment in which users know they are sharing private details of their trials and tribulations with only those who can genuinely relate and understand. Tools are geared towards support and health tracking, engendering a sense of trust and community.

The medical community serves as a complement to generalist sites, with social support networks for Crohns Disease, Huntington’s Disease, Autism and other chronic illnesses or disabilities being leading centers of dialogue and patient focus on the Internet.

The site offers users a powerful social networking platform, an expansive resource base, a database of information, clinical trial data, and health Trackers and knowledge-sharing tools, among other features.

Check it out at <http://www.weareautism.org/>.

When Your Nonverbal Child is in Pain—By Dr. Ruth Brown

Parents of nonverbal children have a daunting task of sorting out symptoms. Is their child seriously ill or just having a bad day? Pediatricians share this challenge with you. Here's the inside look at how we evaluate a nonverbal child with apparent pain:

We ask the usual questions—fever, appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, cough, unusual odor to urine, seizures, medication change. Anything physical we pursue.

A physical exam for ear infection, sore throat, mouth ulcers, dental abscess, pneumonia, abdominal tenderness and skin problems.

If the child is in a cast, the cast must be cut to rule out pressure sores.

If the child has cerebral palsy or other neuromuscular disorder, consider the possibility of a dislocated hip causing pain. A hip x-ray and/or orthopedic evaluation may be indicated. One clue to hip pain is the fact that the child seems to be in pain when the legs are moved and the child requires frequent position changes at nights.

If the child has a shunt, a CAT scan or MRI must be done to rule out shunt problems.

If there is any hint of constipation, this is addressed with enemas and



Laxatives. Constipation can certainly be a cause of pain, especially in the physically disabled child.

If your child is a female of menstruating age and maturation, observe to see if she is beginning her menstrual period. The pain should not occur more than one day before the onset of bleeding.

If all of the above is not helpful in identifying what is causing the discomfort in the child or the child appears seriously ill, then more invasive tests may be indicated—a blood count, and urinalysis (usually by catheter) are basic.

If the above tests and evaluations are nonrevealing, we consider the possibility that the child may have stomach/esophageal discomfort. Gastroesophageal reflux is a common disorder in physically disabled children, and can cause stomach pain. We may try medication to treat this problem and evaluate its effects over a few days.

Autism Conferences, Courses and Events

September 28, 2008

Autism Speaks 2 mile Walk @ Progressive Field in Cleveland, OH

Please join Autism Speaks for their 2nd annual 2 mile walk for autism. You may register as individual walkers or as a team. People can be volunteers or sponsor a walker or a team. Schools can participate with fundraisers. Corporate sponsorships are available.

For more information go to [www. autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org) or call Theresa Norvel at 216-333-3241

October 10-12th, 2008

1st Annual International Autism Summit

Event will feature interactive sessions with over twenty nationally and internationally known speakers. This conference is for parents, professionals, caretakers and educators for children and adults living with Autism and Asperger's Disorders. The conference location is the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel and it is sponsored by University Hospitals, Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, and Autism Today.

For more information go to: www.autismsummit.org or call 1-866-8-EVENTS

September 11, 2008

Asperger's Support Group Meeting

Please join the Asperger's Support Group at the Independence, Ohio Civic Center Red Oaks Room at 7:00 Pm for their bi-monthly support group meeting for those affected by Aspergers, High Functioning Autism, PDD and any other Autism Spectrum Disorders.

This evening proves to be educational and informative to parents, caregivers and anyone affected by these disorders. We hope to see you there.