



June 10, 2011

Join Our Mailing List!



# **ABOARD** *Autism Weekly*

Advisory Board on Autism & Related Disorders

412.781.4116 or toll free: 800.827.9385

## ABOARD'S MISSION:

There is considerable debate throughout the autism community about the cause of autism and issues such as vaccination, diet, inclusion, and appropriate therapies. Legislative acts can also influence services to those with autism. Our policy is to inform. We trust that individuals will assimilate the information we provide and make the best decision for their children and clients.

The entire mission statement can be found at  
<http://aboard.web.officelive.com/aboutus.aspx>

**ABOARD is proud to be a  
conference partner of the**



## 2011 Conference on **ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICITY AND NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS**

### CONFERENCE DATES

Pittsburgh, PA—June 24, 2011

Morgantown, WV—July 15, 2011

[www.envirototoxicityandkids.com](http://www.envirototoxicityandkids.com)

**The Environmental Toxicity and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Conferences** are co-hosted by **The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh** and **Duquesne University**. The conferences will discuss the science surrounding environmental toxins and their harmful effects on our neurodevelopmental system, as well as offer potential strategies to create positive changes in our environment and health practices and policies.

**National speakers representing both academia and medical practitioners from fields such as neurology, toxicology, genetics and environmental health science will be in attendance.**

### ***Pittsburgh Presenters***

**Scott Faber, MD - Developmental Pediatrician**  
The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh

**Martha Herbert MD, PhD, Pediatric Neurologist**  
Massachusetts General Hospital of Harvard Medical School

**H.M. "Skip" Kingston, PhD, Professor**  
Duquesne University Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

**Philip J. Landrigan, MD, MSc, Dean for Global Health and Ethel H. Wise Professor, Chair**  
The Department of Preventive Medicine  
Mount Sinai School of Medicine

**Claudia S. Miller, MD, MS, Professor, Environmental & Occupational Medicine, Vice Chair**

The Department of Family and Community Medicine  
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

**Fredrica Perera PhD, Professor**  
Columbia Mailman School of Public Health

**Isaac Pessah PhD, Professor of Toxicology**  
The University of California, Davis School of Medicine

**Bernard Weiss, PhD, Professor Environmental Medicine and Pediatrics**  
University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry

**[CLICK Here to Register NOW](#)**

**[CLICK Here for Conference Brochure](#)**

## Pittsburgh Conference

Friday, June 24, 2011

### LOCATION

Duquesne University  
600 Forbes Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

### FEE

\$25 (Cancellation Policy: A full refund will be given prior to June 11, 2011)

## Morgantown Conference

Friday, July 15, 2011

### LOCATION

The Waterfront Place Hotel  
Two Waterfront Place  
Morgantown, WV 26501

### FEE

\$25 (Cancellation Policy: A full refund will be given prior to July 2, 2011)

TO REGISTER TODAY, VISIT [www.envirototoxicityandkids.com](http://www.envirototoxicityandkids.com)

**A limited number of scholarships are available.**

For more information about the conference or to apply for a scholarship, please contact Mary Green from The Hutton Group, Inc. 412.833.4360, or 877.982.2200, or [mgreen@thehuttongroup.com](mailto:mgreen@thehuttongroup.com)

CONFERENCE  
PARTNERS



CLAUDE  
WORTHINGTON  
BENEDUM  
FOUNDATION



Funding for this conference was made possible by Grant Number R1CRH20683 from the HRSA Office of Rural Health Policy. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

[www.envirototoxicityandkids.com](http://www.envirototoxicityandkids.com)

Still time to get your ticket to



support ABOARD!



PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS CONCERT WITH  
**BOYZ II MEN**  
JUNE 23, 2011 • 7:30 PM • HEINZ HALL

PSO LOH LARAIA

Join the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Resident Conductor Lawrence Loh for the eighth annual PSO Community Partners Concert. This year's performance features the sounds of Boyz II Men and the winner of the renowned 2011 Sphinx Competition, Paul Larcia. The PSO's Community Partners Concerts have raised more than \$539,000 for partnering nonprofit groups since they began in 2004.

## Pittsburgh Symphony Community Partners Concert Featuring BOYZ II MEN

Location: Heinz Hall

Thursday, June 23, 2011 at 7:30 PM

***TICKETS ON SALE NOW***

Tickets may be ordered in any of the following ways:

calling the PSO Box Office at 412.392.4900 or toll-free: 1.800.743.8560

ordering online at [pittsburghsymphony.org/communitypartners](http://pittsburghsymphony.org/communitypartners)

coming to the PSO box office in person (600 Penn Ave., in Heinz Hall)

**23845 ABOARD - Advisory Board on Autism and Related Disorders**

**100% of your ticket purchase benefits ABOARD!**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Feature

Research

Education

Events/Info

## QUICK LINKS

ABOARD

## NEWSLETTER

Click here to learn about  
**What's Happening**  
at ABOARD and all our  
upcoming events, conference  
and seminars for 2011!

Today's eblast is provided free to the families through the  
support of our sponsor!



**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR FOR HELPING  
PROVIDE THIS SERVICE TO OUR FAMILIES FOR  
FREE!**

## ***Feature.....***

### **Why can't I make friends? SLU assists teens with Asperger's**

Looking for help led Joe as far as the UCLA Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills, a 14-week friendship boot camp for teens with higher-functioning autism disorders. Joe was ready to stay with a relative in Los Angeles, but facilitators said it would be better to find something close to home. Important relationships often continued among participants.

Joe heard SLU might offer a similar program. He reached out to Eichler, wondering if she could help.

Eichler didn't tell him the university only has a social skills intervention for children, not for teens. She didn't tell him she couldn't find anything he was looking for. She couldn't just turn him away.

"We were really touched by his story," Eichler said. "When a teen comes forth and says he's having difficulty, and I need help with this. It was hard to refuse."

She sent emails to gauge interest and got more than 100 responses from parents eager to find

resources for their teens.

She interviewed Joe, asking him how often he left his house and about his grades, his friends and his struggles. Eichler worked with a graduate student to create a six-week program - Teen Connection - using Joe's answers as guidance.

"We were able to organize a program really based on what he was telling us he needed," she said.

Teen Connection started last summer with just six participants and a handful of undergraduate volunteers. The fall session grew to 10 teens, and the spring session had 17 with as many as 30 volunteers involved. Joe attended all three.

[http://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/fitness/article\\_8a69f633-964f-5ecd-ba1e-e8678282fe38.html](http://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/fitness/article_8a69f633-964f-5ecd-ba1e-e8678282fe38.html)

## Research



### **Scientists warn of chemical-autism link**

Autism and environmental health experts called for greater scrutiny of chemicals found in the environment, which could potentially lead to autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders, in a conference call Tuesday. "We live, breathe and start our families in the presence of toxic chemical mixtures and constant low-level toxic exposures, in stark contrast to the way chemicals are tested for safety," said Donna Ferullo, Director of Program Research at The Autism Society.

<http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/2011/06/07/scientists-warn-of-chemical-autism-link/comment-page-6/#comment-190884>

### **Autism linked to hundreds of genetic mutations**

Three new studies conclude that autism disorders are genetically very complex, not caused by one or two gene defects. The potential changes in DNA may produce what are essentially different forms of autism. [Autism](#) is not caused by one or two gene defects but probably by hundreds of different mutations, many of which arise spontaneously, according to research that examined the [genetic](#) underpinnings of the disorder in more than 1,000 families. The findings, reported in three studies [published Wednesday](#) in the journal Neuron, cast autism disorders as genetically very complex, involving many potential changes in [DNA](#) that may produce, essentially, different forms of autism.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-he-autism-20110609,0,770413.story?>

## **Autism and Eating Disorders: A Problematic Connection**

For example, both anorexics and individuals with autism exhibit obsessive/compulsive behavior and rigid thinking. Tic disorders are fairly common among individuals in both populations and both have trouble dealing with change. Additionally, researchers found that some 20 percent of anorexic patients unknowingly suffered from Asperger's Syndrome. Dr. Tony Atwood, autism and AS expert, reports that early ritualistic behavior around food can be the precursor to eating disorders. Problematically, some girls with Asperger's begin to treat their weight as their special interest, becoming obsessed by the science of calories as they pore over charts and tables.

<http://www.autismkey.com/autism-and-eating-disorders-a-problematic-connection/>

## **New Therapies Hold Promise As Autism Treatments**

Two promising new treatments to aid people with autism have shown effectiveness in pilot studies conducted by an Arizona State University professor and private researchers. Several studies indicate that children with autism often have abnormalities in critical biochemical functions that help maintain health - specifically methylation, glutathione, and mitochondrial functions.

<http://www.redorbit.com/news>

## **Looking For Early Signs Of Autism In Brain Waves**

A technology that monitors electrical activity in the brain could help identify infants who will go on to develop autism, scientists say. The technology, known as electroencephalography, or EEG, is also providing hints about precisely how autism affects the brain and which therapies are likely to help children with autism spectrum disorders. "Right now, the earliest we can reliably identify a child is, say, 3 years of age," says Charles Nelson, a professor of pediatrics and neuroscience at Children's Hospital Boston and Harvard Medical School. "Our work is designed to see [if we] can we do that in early infancy, long before any signs or symptoms of autism are apparent in the child's behavior." If EEG lives up to its early promise, Nelson says, children with autism might start getting therapy before their first birthday.

<http://www.npr.org/2011/06/02/136882002/looking-for-early-signs-of-autism-in-brain-waves>

## **Of Interest**



## **Mom's call for new family for son answered with love**

Mother's transition rough, but autistic son has caring home In 2008, a West Allis woman named Carole Eagleman wrote to this newspaper and made a surprising request. She wanted us to print an article saying her severely autistic son, Jessie, needed a new family. Carole, then 67 and experiencing health problems, didn't know how long she would be able to care for her 37-year-



old son. She didn't trust the government safety net, so she was taking matters into her own hands.

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/123170783.html>

### **Walnut Creek moms teach compassion at event**

It was organized by a group of Murwood mothers whose children have issues that range from autism to dyslexia. "We hope this will help kids have understanding and compassion for the kids who learn differently," said Leslie Kowitz, who has two sons at Murwood, one with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and one with autism. "There is some teasing already in second grade and it's so disheartening. Kids like ours who are a little quirky, they get made fun of because of it," she said.

[http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci\\_18203617?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_18203617?nclick_check=1)

### **Never Giving Up Hope**

The experience of belonging. So simple but incredibly important. Twelve years ago when my son was diagnosed, he did not speak. He could be aggressive and had many severe behaviors. His loss of eye contact and focus made it difficult for him to learn picture communication, so we moved to sign language. I remember clearly his first sign was for "more". So basic...the need to be able to ask for "more water" or "more food". But it was communication. By the time he was 4 years old, he was able to speak in 4 word sentences. While I may not have appreciated the progress at the time, it gave us something to hold onto to...it gave us hope.

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/autism-in-real-life/201105/never-giving-hope>

### **A Walk Down the Street with Autism**

For people who are neurotypical a walk down the street might not seem like anything interesting at all. Background noise, lights, litter, it all gets filtered out. But to someone with an Autism Spectrum Disorder or Sensory Processing Disorder it can feel chaotic and overwhelming

In this fascinating YouTube video someone with Aspergers syndrome has tried to give the internet viewing audience a little feel for what it's like to walk down the street in his shoes. Share this with your friends and family to increase awareness and compassion for those living with ASD's every day.

[http://www.theautismsite.com/clickToGive/aut/article/A-Walk-Down-the-Street-with-Autism267/AUT\\_BLOG\\_MOMBLOG\\_CTG](http://www.theautismsite.com/clickToGive/aut/article/A-Walk-Down-the-Street-with-Autism267/AUT_BLOG_MOMBLOG_CTG)

## **Events/Info**



# **ABOARD Support Group Meeting**

For a complete listing of the ABOARD Support Groups please see our website at [www.aboard.org](http://www.aboard.org) !

## **Perspective Program: Intervention Research Study for Adults with ASD**

The Perspectives Program at the University of Pittsburgh is developing new non-drug interventions to meet the unique needs of adults with autism spectrum disorders. Individuals with Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, or Pervasive Developmental Disorder NOS, between the ages of 16-40, are now being accepted into the program. All participants will receive one of two new experimental interventions, Cognitive Enhancement Therapy or Enriched Supportive Therapy, at no cost. Participants must be able to come to the University of Pittsburgh on a regular basis. A new session is beginning soon. To enroll or find out more information contact 1-866-647-3436 or [autismrecruiter@upmc.edu](mailto:autismrecruiter@upmc.edu).

## **Parents in Toto Family & Friends Fishing Day!**

Sunday, June 12, 2011,

20in, Millvale Sportsman Club Lake, Wexford 15090

(Near I-79 Wexford Exit; Rt. 910 & Lake Road), Please RSVP by Tuesday, May 31 to

[johnwills1818@yahoo.com](mailto:johnwills1818@yahoo.com) for a headcount! We appreciate Board of Director President John Wills for organizing this event! Please bring fishing gear and bait; \$3 one-day fishing license available on-site. Parents in Toto will provide hot dogs; beverages, snacks and non-fishing activities. Everyone is welcome! FREE!

## **11th annual Summer Reading extravaganza**

Sunday, June 12

12 - 5 pm

On the lawn at CLP - Main, Oakland

Travel the world without leaving Pittsburgh!  
Celebrate this year's multicultural summer reading theme in an afternoon packed with free fun.

[Click here to pre-register](http://www.carnegie.library.org/summer/extravaganza/preregister/) for Extravaganza and Summer Reading!  
<http://www.carnegie.library.org/summer/extravaganza/preregister/>

Here's a sample of some of the fun things you'll be able to do at Extravaganza:

Watch fun international performances

Personalize a Smiley Cookie with Eat'n Park

Rock out with Radio Disney & Friends

Visit the I Made It! Market and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy's Kid's Day at Schenley Plaza

Check out the Used Book Sale

Visit with the Pittsburgh Pirates

Support your Library

AND SO MUCH MORE...

Bring the whole family! There's fun for everyone!

## **Autism Spectrum in your Classroom: It is All About Relationships**

This 3-hour event will define Autism Spectrum Disorder and provide participants with insight into the

This 3-hour event will define Autism Spectrum Disorder and provide participants with insight into the current research and interventions for children with Autism in their classrooms. As a result of this workshop, participants will be able to: Understand ASD definition, diagnostic criteria, myths, latest research in cause and treatment; be familiar with early benchmark for developmental signs and goals for children; identify developmental signs and red flags for children with ASD; and develop an action plan of goals and interventions for use in their classrooms with all children.

6/18/2011

\$15.00 registration fee made out and addressed to:

Gloria J. Rodriguez-Ransom, LPC  
Office of Child Development  
400 North Lexington Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

**F.A.N. Family Autism Night in the Borough of Franklin Park**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2011

Where: Blueberry Hill Park Activity Center

Time: 5:30pm-7:30pm

Fee: \$6 per child

\$8 per adult

We invite your entire family out for a fun and safe place to have dinner together, be yourselves, and socialize with other families.

Crafts and games will be provided to allow the children time to work on socialization skills, or give brothers and sisters a time on their own, while also allowing parents to network and talk.

Dinner will be provided by Eat 'n Park with gluten and dairy free options.

Seating is limited, so register early...

NO LATER than June 15, 2011

Contact Bonnie Hoolahan with any questions at 412.364.4115 ext. 347

**Fun, Food and Prizes at the Total Learning Center in Murrysville for Kid's Expo**

Murrysville, Pa. - The Total Learning Centers will open their doors to the public for the Kid's Expo on June 25, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Children and adults are invited to come and see what the Total Learning Centers has to offer in this exclusive exhibition of their educational programs. Located at 6335 William Penn Highway in Murrysville, the Kid's Expo will be loads of fun for the whole family with free food, games, and prizes every hour.

When the school year ends and summer begins, parents can become frustrated by the lack of activities for their child to participate in. The Kid's Expo will be a chance for parents in the Murrysville area to see what educational opportunities are available this summer. See if you can win in the Attention Competitions, or if you have the best memory in the family. There's something for everyone at the Total Learning Center Kid's Expo.

Just ten minutes from the Monroeville Mall, the Total Learning Center is a convenient choice for

Just ten minutes from the Independence Mall, the Total Learning Center is a convenient choice for parents interested in helping their child succeed in school. Former students will demonstrate each program, and education specialists will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

This event is free to the public and no reservations are required. Come and enjoy all that the Total Learning Centers have to offer on June 25th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information about Kids Day or the Total Learning Centers, please call 724-387-1204.

### **Autism Sharing and Parenting - Let's talk about WRAP-AROUND!**

Community Behavioral Health Behavioral Health Rehabilitative Services (BHRS) Panel Discussion  
Wednesday, June 15, 2011

6:15pm-8pm

CBH

8th & Market, 7th floor

Philadelphia, PA 19107

(8th St. entrance across from 'ROSS')

Light meal provided

BHRS, also referred to as "wraparound," is a community based service that offers therapeutic interventions to children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances and/or behavioral problems. The services include Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS), Mobile Therapy (MT), and Behavior Specialist Consultant (BSC). The discussion will be lead by Community Behavioral Health's Medical and Clinical staff members. Dr. Paula Humphries, Director of Psychology will be joined by Maria Dobinick, Care Manager and Corinne Thornton, Supervisor on the BHRS Team. They will discuss and answer questions on how BHRS can address the challenges related to an autism diagnosis.

#### **About the Panel Participants:**

Dr. Paula Humphries is currently Director of Psychology at CBH and Director of the Behavioral Health Forensic Evaluation Center at Family Court. She has served as Director for the American Psychological Association Internship Program. Her experience includes Director of Inpatient Behavioral Health Services, private practice doing evaluations in charter schools, Director of a children's inpatient unit and Director of outpatient adult, child and adolescent clinics. Dr. Humphries received her doctorate from Hahnemann University and School Psychology training at Bryn Mawr College.

Maria Dobinick has a Master's Degree in Special Education with a focus on diagnostics and language development. Her 6 years of experience at The Center for Autism included direct care and working with the evaluation team. Ms. Dobinick has specialized training in a variety of treatment modalities including Floortime, PECS, Verbal Behavior, and Functional Behavior Assessments

Corinne Thornton is a supervisor on the BHRS team. She is a licensed social worker and has worked with children involved with trauma at a domestic violence shelter. Ms. Thornton has also worked in several Philadelphia schools as a clinician.

#### **What is ASP?**

ASP is a volunteer run, 501(c)3 community-based, support group with the following goals  
To provide a support system for children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and their

families

To educate the under-informed and culturally diverse populations in Philadelphia area

To advocate for children with ASD and their families

To increase awareness of Autism and related families issues in the Philadelphia area

ASP greatly appreciates your RSVP for an accurate head-count\*

\*Call RSVP Line: 215-413-7106 ~or~ Email: [NASYA06@MSN.COM](mailto:NASYA06@MSN.COM)

**REGISTER NOW For**



[save the date]

# JOEY TRAVOLTA

## FILM WORKSHOP



For Students and Young Adults,  
ages 14-25

**July 18-29<sup>th</sup>**, Monday through Friday  
from 10a.m.-3p.m.

*This workshop is specifically designed to meet social, communication, IEP, transition, and/or vocational goals.*

Please contact us with any questions you may have  
regarding payment schedules and other sources of funding.

[call or email AHEADD for more information]

877.AHEADD.1 (877.243.2331) | [www.aheadd.org](http://www.aheadd.org) | [admin@aheadd.org](mailto:admin@aheadd.org)



***CLICK HERE TO MAKE A PERSONAL DONATION TO ABOARD!***

*Your donation qualifies as a charitable deduction. ABOARD is registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State Bureau of Charitable Organizations. To receive a copy of the official registration and financial information, please call 800-732-0990 within Pennsylvania or visit [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us).*

*ABOARD is a member of the The Chamber of Commerce*



**United Way**

*United Way of Allegheny County Contributor Choice Agency Number 9817*

Find us on Facebook 

**Join our page or join our cause!**

Find us on Facebook 

You can also

add a CAUSE Toolbar so every web search will help ABOARD generate funds! <http://apps.facebook.com/causes/toolbar>



**GOODSEARCH.COM or GOODSHOP.COM - Select "ABOARD"**

## OUR MISSION

ABOARD IS DEDICATED TO MAXIMIZING THE SOCIAL, EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL POTENTIAL AND POSSIBILITIES OF PENNSYLVANIA CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS WITH AUTISM AND RELATED DISORDERS. THROUGH FAMILY SUPPORT, INFORMATION DISSEMINATION, EDUCATION & TRAINING, AWARENESS BUILDING AND COLLABORATION, WE PROVIDE HOPE AND HELP TO PENNSYLVANIANS CONFRONTED WITH THE CHALLENGES OF AUTISM.

**412 - 781- 4116 or 800 - 827- 9385**

[Forward email](#)



*Try it FREE today.*

This email was sent to [autismnews@aboard.org](mailto:autismnews@aboard.org) by [autismnews@aboard.org](mailto:autismnews@aboard.org) | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Advisory Board on Autism and Related Disorders | 35 Wilson Street, Suite 100 | Pittsburgh | PA | 15223