



THE COMMUNICATOR

A Publication of the Autism National Committee



A Goal for Autism Awareness

by Morton Ann Gernsbacher

This month which is Autism Awareness Month [this article was originally written in April 2004], I'm hiding my eyes and those of my autistic 8-year old son from the media.

National headlines that describe autism as an epidemic, or pandemic. Public service announcements liken autism to being kidnapped. A government Web site defines autism as a "devastating scourge." An Autism "expert" decrees that autism is worse "than Sept. 11 and AIDS combined." An Autism Society Canada board member proclaims that autism is worse than cancer -- because people with autism have normal lifespans.

Have you -- like my son and me -- ever heard parents say how learning that their child was autistic was like experiencing a death in their family?

Have you ever been at the playground when a mother classifies her children, standing right there beside her, as this one who is autistic but these other two who are -- thank goodness -- perfectly normal?

They say that autism entails difficulty taking another person's perspective, appreciating how another person might feel. But when I read or hear such hate speech I wonder: Exactly who has a problem taking another person's perspective? Who can't appreciate the feelings of others?

My son surely can. He understands quite well that there are so-called Autism "advocates" who despise autism, who march thousand-fold against it with placards calling for its defeat, its

(Continued on Page 2)



A Goal for Autism Awareness by Morton Ann Gernsbacher.....1

We Autistics Grow Up and Grow Old by Kathy Grant.....2

How to Help You Understand How I Communicate with People by Jordan Ackerson.....3

New Video by and about Larry Bissonnette.....4

***Autism is a World* on CNN.....5**

Book Review by Ann Carpenter of *Sharing our Wisdom*.....6

***Ask Rob* by Rob Cutler.....6**

Having a Voice by Mike Hoover.....7

Autism National Committee Conference.....8

UNH Summer Institute10

demise. His demise.

Oh, you say, those people don't want to get rid of my son, they just want to get rid of that part of him that's autistic. But research demonstrates that autistic traits are distributed into the non-autistic population; some people have more of them, some have fewer. History suggests that many individuals who we would today diagnose as autistic – some severely so – contributed profoundly to our art, our math, our science, and our literature.

Most poignantly, many autistics affirm that it would be impossible to segregate the part of them that is autistic. To take away their autism is to take away their personhood. Despite our politically correct labeling, they are autistic; they don't "have" autism any more than homosexuals have gayness or lesbianism. Like their predecessors in human rights, many autistics don't want to be cured; they want to be accepted. And like other predecessors in civil rights, many autistics don't want to be required to imitate the majority just to earn their rightful place in society.

I'm a middle-aged psychology professor who holds an endowed chair at a major research university. But my son has taught me far more than I ever learned in my lab. Every time he walks by a poster avowing that autism must be eradicated, he teaches me grace. Every time he ignores one of the countless scholarly articles that tower above my desk, asserting he is disordered, he teaches me tolerance. Every time he embraces a world that so frequently rebuffs him, he teaches me unconditional love.

What if next year we celebrate the diversity of social interaction observed within and across all cultures? What if this "awareness" month marked a time to appreciate the variation that all humans demonstrate in their style and competence in communication? What if it heralded an era during which we marveled at the determined focus that in my occupation often wins indefinite tenure but in a precocious child gets labeled as diseased?

Then, neither my son nor I would feel compelled to hide.

Morton Ann Gernsbacher is Vilas Research Professor and Sir Frederic Bartlett Professor of Psychology, UW-Madison. This editorial was originally published in the *Wisconsin State Journal*.

We Autistics Grow Up And Grow Old

by Kathy Grant

As long as I have been part of the autism movement, there has been much too little focus on adults and senior citizens with autism. Yes, it is important that things like early intervention and school age stuff such as IEPs need to be discussed, research into the latest and best methods that are available and necessary, it is important to realize that autistic people grow up to be adults. And when we grow up and grow old, things like jobs, housing, health care, and support services in helping us live our lives to the fullest are not only important, but necessary. Also, we grow old and therefore services for senior citizens are important. I personally know of at least two people with autism who are over the age of 60. Also, people need to know that adults and senior citizens with autism want to share with the wider world about our lives and struggles, both good and bad. We want organizations like the local autism chapters and AUTCOM to have sessions that focus entirely on adults and what adults and senior citizens face.

People need to hear about how a young adult with autism riding the bus to work sees a pretty woman and inadvertently scares her because he finds her pretty and does not know how to communicate that he just wants to talk to her. People need to hear about that some people don't get diagnosed with autism until their late 50s. Personally, when I was at the Best of the Northwest conference in Seattle in 2000, I had a woman tell me that she just found out her husband may be on the spectrum at the age of 87! And I have talked to people who were diagnosed in their late 50s find relief that what they have has a name to it. And the relief they find is tremendous because they feel like that there is a reason why they could never make friends or understand the social side of things well. It means that they don't have to blame themselves for being at fault for something that has its origin in the brain.

People need to hear about married persons with autism and how they live their lives. For example, I have a married friend with autism tell me that he consults with his wife on things all time. He said that he had to turn down a conference a few months ago, where they asked him to be on a panel because they only paid expenses and not an honorarium. And as a

Ideas To Help You Understand How I Communicate With People

By Jordan Ackerson
November 23, 2003

- 1) If possible, please let me finish what I'm trying to say rather than jumping in, interrupting, and trying to finish my sentence for me.
- 2) If you ask me a question, please *give me enough time to process* what you asked me so I'm able to give you a clear answer. If you repeat the question too soon, or ask me another question, then I forget your original question and I don't know what to say.
- 3) Slow your pace down when you're talking to me or otherwise my brain can't process auditorily what you said. I don't have trouble hearing, it just takes my brain a little longer to interpret what is being said to me.
- 4) Before changing the topic, it's fine to ask me if I was tracking what you were saying. I will also try to let you know if I am not following you, or if I forget what you were saying.
- 5) Very general questions are harder for me to answer. It would be very helpful when you ask me a question if you could give me choices from which to answer.
- 6) Sometimes people who have autism tend to go on talking about one subject a little bit longer than they really need to. If that happens, you have my permission to let me know, in a very courteous way, when you're having trouble listening to me. You can let me know when you're feeling like you are ready to change the topic.
- 7) Even though it takes me longer to process what's being said, that *doesn't* mean that I don't understand what's going on in the world.
- 8) Please understand that it takes a lot of my energy to focus on what's being said to me. If I don't follow what you're saying, that doesn't mean that I'm not trying to listen.
- 9) To let you know, my brain thinks very fast and I can't get words quite as quickly as my thoughts. This sometimes causes me to pant, or to repeat the same words to make sure that people are still listening to me while I'm working getting my words out.
- 10) Whenever I'm feeling an emotion, I make a distinction between feeling that emotion and being that emotion. For example, if a sad event happens, I like to say that sad is not what I am, but how I feel at the time.

Growing Old (Continued from Page 2)

newly married couple (the one year anniversary was last month), they both have jobs and bills to pay. And now the husband just found out that he has to look for a new job because the job that he has had for 10 years is being phased out at the end of September. The married man told me his wife comes first and this shows how much he loves and values her.

People need to know that sometimes we need more support on living our lives. For example, there are some of us on the spectrum who need more than just one social skills class a week on how to maintain friends and friendships. It gladdens their hearts when someone actually takes the time to befriend him/her and take time to listen to them and share his/her interests (regardless of how esoteric) and do ordinary things like shop and go to the movies. And supports can also come when unexpected things like bed bug infestations arise and that person's family and advocate help out with things such as buying new bedding and making sure that person's emotional stability is not rocked too much.

People need to hear about triumphs big and small from adults and senior citizens with autism. And these can range from a person who just got his/her first paycheck from a job in the community and spending some of that hard earned cash on Madonna tapes, to seeing that person go out to lunch on his birthday and have that lunch be paid for by his good friend, to hearing about the adventures of taking pictures of Gothic churches in Buffalo, NY because they are cute, to knowing that person has an influence on other people's lives because he is on the Board of an organization whose main focus is safeguarding the human rights of people on the autism spectrum.

What is more is that many parents of children on the spectrum want to know and hear about what their child will be like when he/she grows up. And it makes them happy when they meet an adult with autism who is living and contributing to the community. It is also comforting to know that there are autistic people who are over 65 and are still working and enjoying life.

After all, children with autism grow up to be adults and these adults with grow old. And when these adults grow old, it is important to know about their lives and to learn from them. After all, life does not stop at the age of 18.

**NEW VIDEO BY AND ABOUT
AUTCOM BOARD MEMBER**

***My Life As An Artist:
A Portrait Of Larry Bissonnette***

*A Documentary Film (20 Minutes) produced by
Douglas Biklen and Zach Rossetti
And written by Larry Bissonnette.*

This documentary shows a day in the life of outsider, Vermont artist Larry Bissonnette. Bissonnette reveals his wit from the very beginning of the film as he describes how he experiences autism:

"Sonic sensitivity, placidity in personal relationships, loose personal hygiene, language processing problems, primitive, plastic social skills, kooky behaviors, activities limited by obsessive routines, gastronomical choices stuck on McDonalds, rote learning habits: this is a summary of autism's daily impact on my life."

Looking back on his years of living in a closed institution for people labeled mentally retarded, he assesses this form of "apartheid" as "better for growing vegetables rather than people." He describes his entry into art as a way of "keeping busy as powerless to communicate young child." This is a documentary filled with Bissonnette's humorous but also poignant assessments of his life, including this one about labeling: "Fastening labels on people is like leasing cars with destinations determined beforehand."

The documentary also reveals many examples of the complexities of expression, as Bissonnette moves back and forth from speech to typing to painting, and should therefore be of extreme interest to parents, teachers, and others who are concerned about how to support the communication of people with speech differences.

For more information on ordering this videotape and for other videotapes related to facilitated communication, please go to the following website:

<http://soeweb.syr.edu/thefci/edmat.htm>

You can also write:

Facilitated Communication Institute
School of Education
Syracuse University
370 Huntington Hall
Syracuse, NY 13244-2340
Phone: (315)443-9657
Fax: (315)443-9218



Autism Is a World

Oscar-Nominated Documentary about Sue Rubin shown on CNN

“Autism Is a World,” a co-production of CNN Productions and State of the Art Inc., made its television premiere as a CNN Presents documentary on Sunday, May 22, at 8 p.m. (ET). The film, nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Documentary Short Subject by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in February, is a candid and compelling look into the mind of Sue Rubin, a 26-year-old Los Angeles woman living with autism.

“Autism Is a World” combines Rubin’s courageous writing with a sensitive, dramatic reading by actress Julianna Margulies. Brought to life through the powerful filmmaking of Gerardine Wurzburg, “Autism Is a World” offers a view of autism as it has rarely been seen—from the inside out. The film was produced and directed by Wurzburg. Jennifer Hyde was the supervising producer for CNN Productions.

“We were delighted to work with Gerry Wurzburg to tell the remarkable story of a true hero, Sue Rubin,” said Sid Bedingfield, senior vice president of CNN Productions and executive producer of “Autism Is a World.” “Her courage and eloquence are inspiring. She takes us inside the world of autism, allowing us to understand this mysterious disorder in ways we never have before.”

“Imagine a life that in 26 years has spanned being labeled as retarded and becoming an honor student in college,” said filmmaker Gerardine Wurzburg.

“Imagine accomplishing all of this without the gift of speech. This is why it was such a privilege to work with Sue and her family on this production. Today, there are thousands of children facing the diagnosis of autism. For them and for their families, Sue’s story is a beacon of hope.”

Rubin has been on an extraordinary journey for 26 years. When she was 4, her unusual behavior led to a diagnosis of autism and contributed to the belief that she was mentally retarded. But at age 13, a new communication technique gave Rubin the ability to connect with the world and exhibit her considerable intelligence. Now, she is a junior in college, a tireless disabilities-rights activist and an articulate guide into autism.

Rubin wrote the documentary and is the viewer’s guide into autism. By typing into a handheld communication device, Rubin explains her feelings and her actions, such as her need to clutch spoons or why she finds comfort in falling water; her relationships with other people; and how she copes with the tasks of daily living and the challenges of college.

Rubin also describes some of her unusual behavior. She does not make eye contact when greeting strangers and instead may fixate on their shirt buttons. She cannot verbalize a person’s name but may frequently repeat the same word or phrase. By discussing some of her behaviors, Rubin provides insight into this complex part of autism.

Rubin guides the audience through all that is special and usual about her life. From the racetrack where she goes to unwind to the classroom where her intellect shines and from a presentation at an autism conference to the challenges of paying bills or shopping, Rubin takes an unflinching look at the world of autism and the challenges she must face daily.

Selected CNN Presents programs will be aired as commercial-free classroom editions. For further information about on-line curriculum and airdates, please visit www.CNNStudentnews.com

Free copies of “Autism Is a World” will be provided to 16,000 libraries across the United States, made possible by a grant from the *Nancy Lurie Marks Family Foundation*.

State of the Art Inc. is a Washington, D.C.-based production company founded by Gerardine Wurzburg. In 2003, State of the Art and CNN Productions co-produced the documentary “President Kennedy Has Been Shot.”

Book Review

By Ann Carpenter

Sharing Our Wisdom: A Collection of Presentations by People Within the Autism Spectrum

Edited By Gail Gillingham and Sandra McClennen

This book is a compilation of presentations done at different conferences over the years, by individuals on the autism spectrum. Published as a project for the Autism National Committee, it spotlights the feelings that individuals on the autism spectrum have when they are overwhelmed by too much sensory stimulation, cannot communicate their needs, and cannot control their bodies the way they want to. When reading these wonderfully insightful essays, one can feel the palpable sense of frustration that the writers have when trying to manipulate their bodies in the way that they need to for communication and for everything else. Many of the authors use Facilitated Communication, which has opened doors of opportunity for them. These are presentations at various autism conferences held between 1996 and 2003, in different parts of the country, that focused on advocacy and full inclusion in the community, instead of the current Cure the Disease model and attitude of pity that is currently at play.

Several themes run through this stellar collection of presentations: abuse, the need for alternative communication, and the desperate need to be accepted as a person in one's own right. In each presentation, the individual tells what it was like to have autism in childhood, and then in adolescence and adulthood, when life would become much more difficult because of the lack of services and limited job opportunities. Some of the people in this book are older, in their fifties and sixties, so they have grown up in society that did not accept people with disabilities, and several of the contributors have been in institutions. They document the damage that institutionalization and the excessive use of medications, such as the older neuroleptics, have done to them physically and psychologically. Other aspects of life on the Spectrum include employment, dealing with other overlapping conditions, such as OCD and anxiety, imagination, and the very troubling notion of what it would be like to be "cured" of autism. My essay referred to a

recent science-fiction novel, *The Speed of Dark*, about a man with autism who consents to a treatment using nanotechnology to completely reverse adult autism. In it, I raised the question of what and who would I be, if I were cured.

Most of the authors in this gem of a book use FC, so it is a wonderful collection of thoughts and revelations about life on the autism spectrum. Reading these essays, I was struck once again with how absolutely insightful and brilliant these people are and that we need to give FC the benefit of the doubt. Though some of these presentations were done several years ago, and granted, most of the authors have changed and grown over the years, the ideas and concepts behind what they have said stand the test of time. This should be in every autism library!

This book is published for the Autism National Committee by Tacit Publishing, Inc. It is available through the Autism National Committee's Bookstore for \$18.00. The bookstore has many other titles related to autism and can be found online at the Autism National Committee web site:

<http://www.autcom.org>

The book may also be ordered by:

BY FAX: (608) 222-7670

BY E-MAIL: sryoung@ameritech.net

BY VOICE MAIL: (800) 378-0386 (U.S. only)

Domestic Shipping and Handling Costs: \$4.00/order plus \$1.00/item

ASK ROB



By Rob Cutler

Q: Many students with ASD seem not to be listening or even interested in listening. Do you have any advice for teachers?

A: *I want to tell you it is important to communicate with your child. Don't think you know what your child is thinking or what he wants. Don't think because a person looks different that they can't think or communicate. Learn to talk with your child. Please believe it can be done.*

Speak with one voice at a time. Too many voices get thrown together making it impossible to understand.

It is important to make things clear for the person. Make the person feel calm. Only talk about what is

relevant.

Sometimes you can use phrases or talk to us about things we like. It needs to refocus our thoughts to move on . Do not keep repeating questions. Give us time to respond.

We sometimes miss words and it may take us time to answer. We need to have time to respond. When I hear things I may miss words. On print I can control the words going into my mind. I love visual input.

Many people with autism crash when asked to perform and when meeting people. If we are given time in which we can process in our speed we can function. Like a teacher we need to have time to prepare. It's the speed of life that we have difficulty.

Having a Voice

by Mike Hoover

I think I need to tell people how I had a time in my life when I had very little chance to tell people what I needed to be happy and to be safe and healthy. The people around me did their best to guess what I needed. Sometimes I had the chance to point to things. I had other times when I could not communicate what I needed.

I think people without a voice have frustration others can never understand. I love my family and my helpers. It is only when I have a voice to communicate the needs and the things in my soul that I become equal to them. I must keep my ability to communicate by typing or once again I will move to no more than a person who makes noises and echoes back like a parrot.

I need to let you know that until I was 20 years old I did not have a complete voice. I need you to go for a few days without communicating with nothing more than a few pictures to point at or echo what someone says even if it is not the choice you want. How do you say you have a migraine if that is not in the vocabulary offered to you. The doctor may not think you are smart enough to understand what he is saying and talk to whoever is in the room with you but never look at you when he talks. The patient either gets mad or else feels less than human if this is the way their whole life goes every day.

I think I need you to know how my life was opened up when I began typing with facilitation. I think I need

to have the time to let you know how I began to tell people clearly what I wanted, no guessing by others.

I think I need you to know that each person has value and the need to communicate their ideas whenever a choice is there. I need to tell the people who read this to think about how they communicate with others.

Do they look at the person or do they look at who is with them. I think I need to have you think about each person as a person who is capable of being a communications partner even if the communication method is different than yours. I think I need to tell you to be patient and wait for an answer. I think I need to thank you for your interest in those who do things in different ways than you. I think I need to tell you that the things you do to honor others communication will enrich the lives of others more than you may ever know.

That's all for now. Mike Hoover

Mike Hoover lives in Boulder and was appointed to the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council by Governor Owens in July 2004. He is on the National Autism Committee Board of Directors, the Colorado TASH Board, is a founding member of Watch Our Words (WOW Colorado), a trainer in Facilitated Communication, Inclusion, and Disability Advocacy.

Check out our website at:
<http://www.autcom.org>

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you have not renewed your membership for 2005, please use the membership form on page 16 of *The Communicator* to renew your membership. If you are not a member and share the principles of the Autism National Committee (see page 16) we encourage you to join.



HOLD THE DATES!!

The Autism National Committee Conference
Honoring People with Autism
September 9 - 10, 2005

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nashua, New Hampshire

Friday, September 9, 2005, 7:00 p.m.

“Autism Is A World”

Oscar nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary, “Autism Is A World” provides a compelling look into the mind of Sue Rubin, a 26 year old Los Angeles woman living with autism. Rubin’s life spans the early years when she was labeled retarded to the current time when she is an honor student at college.

Rubin wrote the documentary and guides the audience through all that is both special and usual about her life, - her feelings and actions, her need to clutch spoons, her relationships, her unwinding time at the racetrack, and how she copes with the tasks of daily living and the challenges of college.

Saturday, September 10, 2005 - 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

8:00 Registration

8:45 Welcome

9:00 Morning Keynote - “Toward a Framework for Understanding Autism”,
Martha Herbert, MD, PhD, pediatric neurologist and brain researcher,
Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School.

10:15 Break

10:30 Concurrent Sessions

A. “The Handle Method: A Holistic Approach to Neurodevelopment and Learning Efficiency”, Judith Bluestone, Director, the Handle Institute.

B. Autism and Higher Education”, Sharisa Kochmeister and Sean Sokler, College Graduates, and Stephen Shore, Doctoral Candidate.

C. “How FC Changed My Life”, Tom Page, Wally Wojtowicz, Sandra Radisch and Barbara Rentenbach; moderated by Sally Young, PhD.

12:00 Lunch

12:45 Gail Gillingham will honor the authors of Sharing Our Wisdom
(slide presentation)

1:00 Afternoon Keynote: “Misdiagnosis in Persons with Autism”,
Ruth Ryan, MD, neuropsychiatrist, Chief Clinical Officer, Grafton, VA

2:00 Break

2:15 Concurrent Sessions

D. “My Classic Life as an Artist”, a film featuring Larry Bissonnette. Discussion follows with Larry Bissonnette and Barbara Moran, AutCom Board members.

E. “Communication Supports for Learning in Inclusive Settings”, Michael

McSheehan, Clinical Faculty, University of New Hampshire, Communication Sciences and Disorders.

F. "Autism and Self-Advocacy", Robert Cutler, Past President of AutCom; Anne

Carpenter, vice-President; Sharisa Kochmeister and Mike Hoover, Board Members

3:30 The Last Word - AutCom Board Members with autism

4:00 Inclusion Video of 3rd grade inclusion class featuring Natalie and her classmates singing "Keep the Dream Alive"

Book Store: The Bookstore will be open Saturday at 8 a.m.

Room Reservations: Please make hotel and travel arrangements as early as possible. The special room rate of \$95 per night plus 8% tax is only available through August 10th. Reservations should be made directly with the Crowne Plaza at 1-800-9-Nashua (1-800-962-7482)

The Manchester NH airport is strongly recommended. The Crowne Plaza will pick up guests at the Manchester Airport if you give them your flight information in advance.

Directions; Take exit 8 from the F.E. Everett Turnpike/Route 3 north or south. The Crowne Plaza Hotel is on the left less than a mile down the ramp.

Call the hotel or visit www.Crowneplaza.com for more directions and map.

Registration Form

Registration fees postmarked before August 31, 2005 are as follows:

Friday Evening, September 9

Dessert Social, Viewing & Discussion of film

Saturday, September 10 (lunch included) \$25.00 US

Professionals

Parents/Family Members \$80.00 US

Individuals with autism \$60.00 US

Combination Friday & Saturday Rates \$30.00 US

Professionals

Parents/Family Members \$95.00 US

Individuals with autism \$75.00 US

Registrations postmarked after August 31, add \$40.00 US

I am contributing \$_____ to support people with autism \$10.00 US

coming to the conference. TOTAL AMOUNT DUE _____

If a receipt is desired, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Make checks payable to Autism National Committee and mail form and payment to:

Autism National Committee

P.O.Box 6175

North Plymouth MA 02362-6175

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: () _____ E-Mail _____

Institute on Disability/UCED

University of New Hampshire

New Hampshire's 7th Annual Summer Institute on Educating Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in General Education Classrooms: Focus on Participation and Learning

August 15-19, 2005 • Holloway Commons • Durham

Hosted by: The University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability and New Hampshire's LEND Program

This five-day conference will provide participants with state-of-the-art information and strategies in the area of educating students with ASD in general education classes. Each morning, participants will hear a keynote presentation from a self-advocate or parent, and a leader in the field of ASD. In the afternoon, participants will work in small groups to synthesize new information and develop strategies for supporting students in their schools and families. Self-advocates who experience ASD and family members will be part of the conference during the entire week, creating an inclusive learning environment for everyone.

During keynote presentations and work group sessions, critical issues will be discussed such as: Can all students with autism learn the general education curriculum? What are the roles of direct instruction and applied behavior analysis in the educational programs of students with autism? How can teams work effectively together to plan and deliver integrated instructional and communication supports?

The Autism Summer Institute is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, H325D030034, to the Institute on Disability.

Agenda

- Monday, August 15: "You're Going to Love this Kid! Teaching Students with Autism in the General Education Classroom" - *Karen Turner and Paula Kluth*
- Tuesday, August 16: "Supporting Membership and Full Participation: The Importance of High Expectations" - *Jamie Burke and Cheryl M. Jorgensen*
- Wednesday, August 17: "Inclusion and Applied Behavior Analysis: Mending Fences and Building Bridges" - *Andrea Kaneb and Ilene S. Schwartz*
- Thursday, August 18: "Beyond Access: Planning for Content Learning" - *Stephen Hinkle and Michael McSheehan*
- Friday, August 19: "Organizational and Systemic Prescriptions for Successful Inclusion"
• *Karen Turner, New Hampshire School Administrators and Teachers, Sandy Plocharczyk, Coordinator, Special Education Resource Center*

For more detailed information and registration materials visit: <http://iod.unh.edu/>

Or write: UNH-Institute on Disability, The Concord Center, 10 Ferry Street, #14.
Concord, NH, 03301-5091

PRINCIPLES OF THE AUTISM NATIONAL COMMITTEE

As a member of the Autism National Committee I endorse for all people with autism, pervasive developmental disorders, and related disabilities the development of appropriate community services, including education, residences, jobs/job training programs, and of individually appropriate and adequate support services in all locations for both individuals and their family members; of state-of-the-art communication options for all individuals with unique communicative and social needs; of adequate supports to every family to assist them in maintaining their disabled family member in their home at least throughout the childhood and adolescent years; and the dissemination of available knowledge of those aspects of the disability requiring special support and understanding; the promotion of research to provide parents and professionals with greater insight into the unique needs of individuals with autism and related disabilities; and the use, development, and promotion of positive, respectful approaches for teaching every aspect of life.

Moreover, I oppose the use of institutions to separate people from their communities, and deprive them of dignity, freedom and the level of independence they can achieve in supportive community living; the use of procedures involving pain, humiliation, deprivation, and dangerous drugs as a means to alter and control individual's behavior; the increasing use of bizarre technology to control self-injurious and aggressive behavior; the widespread ignorance of the basic social and communicative needs of people with autism; and the widespread disregard for the individual's unique, basic and human needs. I object to programs which disregard the skills, preferences and basic human needs of the people they serve, and I believe that there is no longer need or any justification for using painful and abusive procedures.

Officers and Chairpersons

Jeffery Strulley, Ph.D. *President*
Anne Bakeman, *Secretary*
Ralph Maurer, MD, *Scientific Advisor*
Alan Kurtz *Communicator Editor*

Anne Carpenter, MS, *Vice President*
Wade Hitzing, Ph.D., *Treasurer*
Anne Donnellan *International Representative*
Roz Forsyth *Information and Referral*

THE COMMUNICATOR is a publication of the Autism National Committee, Inc., a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization founded in 1990 to protect and advance the civil rights of people with Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder and related disorders of communication and behavior. Contributions of articles, information, letters and notices are welcome. THE COMMUNICATOR does not carry advertising or fundraising announcements, and we reserve the right to edit all submissions. Your comments are actively sought. Write to the chair of the editorial committee Alan Kurtz, 118 Raymond Road, Palmyra, Maine 04965. THE COMMUNICATOR may be copied in its entirety or individual articles reprinted without permission except where otherwise noted.

Please credit the Autism National Committee

THE AUTISM NATIONAL COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 6175

North Plymouth, MA 02362-6175

(Information and Referral - Roz Forsyth at above address)

www.autcom.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

Annual memberships begins in January. Because I endorse the principles of the Autism National Committee, I would like to :

JOIN NOW

RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

I AM A:

- FAMILY MEMBER
- PERSON WITH AUTISM
- FRIEND
- PROFESSIONAL:

FIELD: _____

The annual membership fee is 30.00. For persons with autism the fee is \$10.00. I am enclosing an extra \$ _____ to speed up the good work. Make check payable Autism National Committee and mail to:

The Autism National Committee is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your contribution are tax deductible and will be promptly acknowledged for your records.



AUTISM NATIONAL COMMITTEE
Wade Hitzing, Treasurer
1045 Wittman Drive
Fort Myers, Fl. 33919