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Day of
Learning

September 22, 2020



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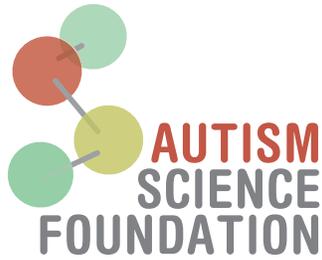
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The Autism Science Foundation provides funding directly to scientists conducting cutting-edge autism research to discover the causes of autism and develop better treatments. We also provide information about autism to the general public and support the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

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Scott Badesch is the outgoing President & CEO of the Autism Society. A father of a young adult with autism, Scott led his local Autism Society affiliate before joining the national office in 2010 as Senior Vice President of Development and Operations. He has more than 30 years of experience in nonprofit organizations, particularly in fundraising, chapter outreach, advocacy and public policy, and transformation of organizations. Before joining the Autism Society national office, Scott served as President and CEO of the Autism Society of North Carolina. Other experience includes 14 years as President and CEO of the United Way of Palm Beach County, and six years as President and CEO of the United Way of South Carolina.



Past winners

- 2011* Pat Schissel
- 2012* Allyson Schwartzman
- 2013* Mark Krinsky
- 2014* Dr. Paul Offit
- 2015* Gregg and Lori Ireland
- 2016* Erin Lopes and Tim Bak
- 2017* Liane Carter
- 2018* Marjorie Madfis
Jonah and Ellen Zimiles
- 2019* Bryan and Melissa Harkins
- 2020* Scott Badesch

Speakers

Dr. Vanessa H. Bal is an Associate Professor and Karmazin and Lillard Chair in Adult Autism at Rutgers' Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP). Dr. Bal earned her M.Sc. in Neuroscience from the University of Oxford, her Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Michigan and a postdoc in Human Genetics at the University of California San Francisco. She is a licensed clinical psychologist and director of the Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services (RCAAS) Psychological Services Clinic. Dr. Bal also leads the Lifespan Symptom Profiles, Achievements & Needs (LifeSPAN) ASD Lab, a research program aimed at advancing understanding of ASD in adulthood. Her research and clinical interests span characterization of clinical phenotypes in Autism Spectrum Disorders across adulthood; identifying mechanisms underlying behavioral profiles; assessment of strengths and challenges of minimally verbal individuals with ASD; and identification of childhood predictors of later-life achievements.



Dr. Matthew D. Lerner is an Associate Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry, & Pediatrics in the Department of Psychology at Stony Brook University, where he directs the Social Competence and Treatment Lab. He has worked for more than 15 years in clinical and research settings developing interventions for social challenges in individuals with ASD. Dr. Lerner's research focuses on understanding emergence and "real world" implications of social problems in children and adolescents with ASD, as well as development and evaluation of novel, evidence-based approaches for ameliorating those problems. He has published greater than 90 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, and serves on Editorial Boards of 8 academic journals. Dr. Lerner has received grants from organizations including the National Institutes of Health, the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation, the Simons Foundation, and the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Dr. Lerner has received several acknowledgments, including the Biobehavioral Research Award for Innovative New Scientists (BRAINS) from the National Institute of Mental Health; the Early Career Research Contributions Award from the Society for Research in Child Development; the Abidin Early Career Award from the Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology; a Young Investigator Award from the International Society for Autism Research; the Transformative Contributions Award from the Autism & Developmental Disabilities SIG of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies; and the Rising Star designation from the Association for Psychological Science.



Dr. Catherine Lord is the George Tarjan Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Education at the Semel Institute of Neuroscience and Human Behavior in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. She is a practicing clinical psychologist whose primary focus is autism and related disorders across the lifespan – from toddlers through adulthood. Her research and clinical work have involved the development of diagnostic instruments that describe individual profiles of skills and weaknesses and carrying out longitudinal studies from age 15 months up to 26 years with the goal of identifying protective and risk factors that influence milestones of progress over the years. Dr. Lord is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and a fellow of the American Association of Arts and Sciences.



Speakers

Dr. James C. McPartland is an Associate Professor at the Yale Child Study Center. He is a licensed child psychologist and Director of the Yale Developmental Disabilities Clinic. Dr. McPartland's laboratory investigates the brain basis of neurodevelopmental disabilities to develop biologically-based tools to improve detection and treatment. He is the Principal Investigator of the Autism Biomarkers Consortium for Clinical Trials, a nationwide effort to identify biomarkers to support intervention research in autism spectrum disorder. Dr. McPartland's contributions to the field have been recognized by numerous awards, and he has been named a Fellow in two divisions of the American Psychological Association. He is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders and on the editorial boards of the Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders, the Journal of Mental Health Research in Intellectual Disabilities, and the Encyclopedia of Autism and Related Disorders. He has served on the executive boards of the International Society for Autism Research and the APA Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, he proudly serves as the Chair of the Autism Science Foundation Scientific Advisory Board.



Dr. Melanie Pellecchia is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania in the Penn Center for Mental Health. She is a licensed clinical psychologist, nationally certified school psychologist (NCSP) and board certified behavior analyst (BCBA). She holds a Master's degree in applied behavior analysis and a doctorate in School Psychology from Temple University. Dr. Pellecchia's clinical and research interests lie in improving the implementation of evidence-based treatments for children with autism spectrum disorders in under-served communities, especially public schools and early intervention settings. She is an expert in delivering – and training others to deliver – high quality treatments for young children with autism. Dr. Pellecchia has extensive experience developing and evaluating publicly funded education programs for children with autism spectrum disorder, and working with teachers, staff and administrators to improve their implementation of evidence-based practices.



Dr. Pellecchia's research is focused on partnering with community stakeholders to develop implementation strategies that are feasible, sustainable and appropriate for use in community settings. She is the recent recipient of an Early Career Development Award from the Institute of Education Sciences. Through this award, Dr. Pellecchia is partnering with community stakeholders in early intervention to improve the use of evidence-based strategies for families of young children with autism.

Dr. Brian Scassellati is a Professor of Computer Science, Cognitive Science and Mechanical Engineering at Yale University, and Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Expedition on Socially Assistive Robotics. His research focuses on building embodied computational models of human social behavior, especially the developmental progression of early social skills. Using computational modeling and socially interactive robots, his research evaluates models of how infants acquire social skills and assists in the diagnosis and quantification of disorders of social development (such as autism). His other interests include humanoid robots, human-robot interaction, artificial intelligence, machine perception and social learning.



Dr. Scassellati received his Ph.D. in Computer Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2001. His dissertation work (Foundations for a Theory of Mind for a Humanoid Robot) with Rodney Brooks used models drawn from developmental psychology to build a primitive system for allowing robots to understand people. His work at MIT focused mainly on two well-known humanoid robots named Cog and Kismet. He also holds a Master of Engineering in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering (1995), and Bachelors degrees in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering (1995), and Brain and Cognitive Science (1995), all from MIT.



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Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services (RCAAS)

is proud to recognize Dr. Vanessa Bal as the Rutgers GSAPP
Karmazin-Lillard Endowed Chair in Adult Autism

Through its three units, the RCAAS offers adults with ASD a unique mix of vocational and recreational programs within an inclusive university setting

Supporting Community Access through Leisure and Employment (SCALE)

provides adults with ASD community-based supports specifically tailored to their needs while advancing research initiatives in the field of adult autism services

College Support Program (CSP)

offers individualized support for Rutgers undergraduates, working collaboratively with key campus partners to ensure success during and after college

Psychological Services Clinic (PSC)

is led by Dr. Vanessa Bal and provides evaluative and therapeutic services for adults with autism



Center for Autism and the Developing Brain

A comprehensive state-of-the-art psychological, medical and allied professional program in a single setting to address the needs of individuals living with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disorders. NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital is committed to improving the understanding of autism spectrum disorders and developing innovative, more effective treatments and management approaches for individuals and their families.

Learn more at nyp.org/CADB

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ALEX PLANK IS A FILMMAKER, ACTOR, FOUNDER OF WRONGPLANET.NET, AND A SUPERHERO. HE WAS DIAGNOSED WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME AT AGE 9.

IT TAKES BRAINS TO SOLVE AUTISM

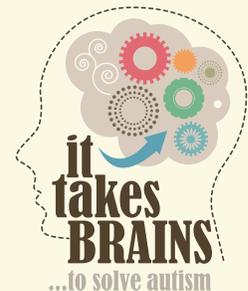
Alex Plank never saw himself as super. More like "awesome" really. He feels that being on the autism spectrum is a gift, and he wants to share that gift with scientists so they can understand what makes his brain unique.

Many think Alex and others just like him are super heroes. Why?

They've all been united by one brave and heroic act... pledging to donate their brain tissue to science when they are, sadly, no longer with us. It's difficult to think about, but the reality is that brain tissue is urgently needed for the scientific research that will help thousands of people with autism.

So join Alex to help ensure a brighter future for all. Because it takes brains to solve autism.

Visit TakesBrains.org to learn more.



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SIBLINGS HAVE A HUGE ROLE TO PLAY IN UNCOVERING THE CAUSES OF AUTISM



EVEE AND TOMMY

A SMALL GESTURE CAN DO A LOT OF GOOD FOR AUTISM RESEARCH

For years, more males have been diagnosed with autism than females, but little is known about why.

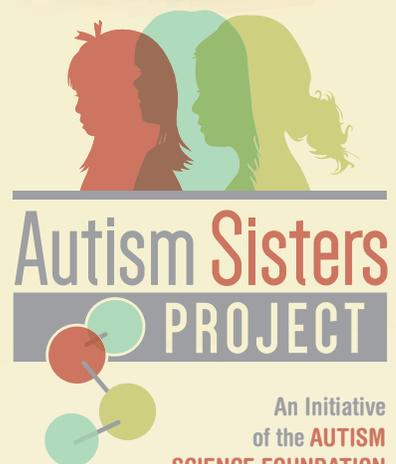
Science suggests that females may be protected in some way.

The Autism Sisters Project aims to build a large genetic database of unaffected female siblings to explore this female protective factor.

Autism researchers need DNA and information from the entire family, especially from sisters who don't have autism.

**I GAVE A SPIT FOR AUTISM.
YOU CAN TOO.**

Collecting DNA is as simple as spitting into a cup. Get started by completing the family information form online at bit.ly/spit4autism.



An Initiative
of the **AUTISM
SCIENCE FOUNDATION**
and **THE HILIBRAND
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The Autism Science Foundation (ASF) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting and funding autism research.
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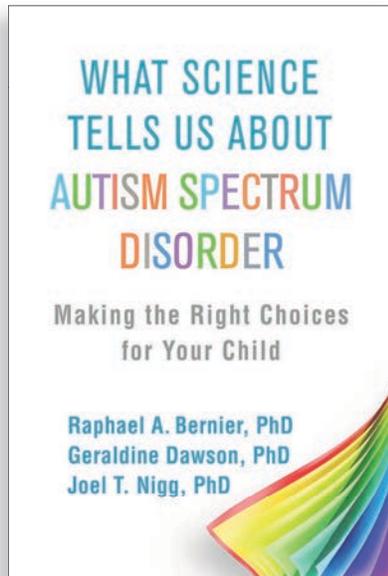


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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington.

Raphael A. Bernier, PhD, is Executive Director of the Seattle Children's Autism Center, Associate Director of the Center on Human Development and Disability, and Professor of Psychiatry



Autism and Brain Development at Duke University.

Geraldine Dawson, PhD, is the William Cleland Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Director of the Duke Institute for Brain Sciences, and Director of the Duke Center for



Joel T. Nigg, PhD, is Director of the Division of Psychology and Professor of Psychiatry, Pediatrics, and Behavioral Neuroscience at Oregon Health and Science University.

New

What Science Tells Us about Autism Spectrum Disorder

Making the Right Choices for Your Child

**Raphael A. Bernier, PhD
Geraldine Dawson, PhD
Joel T. Nigg, PhD**

This invaluable book helps parents put the latest scientific knowledge about autism to work for their unique child. It describes the gold-standard assessment process that parents should seek to ensure an accurate and complete diagnosis, and shows how to choose interventions that target a child's individual needs. Separating fact from fiction, the book differentiates unsupported treatments from bona fide breakthroughs and guides parents to make lifestyle choices that support the developing brain. From the impact of sleep, exercise, diet, and technology, to making a plan for the transition to adulthood, the authors cover it all with expertise and compassion.

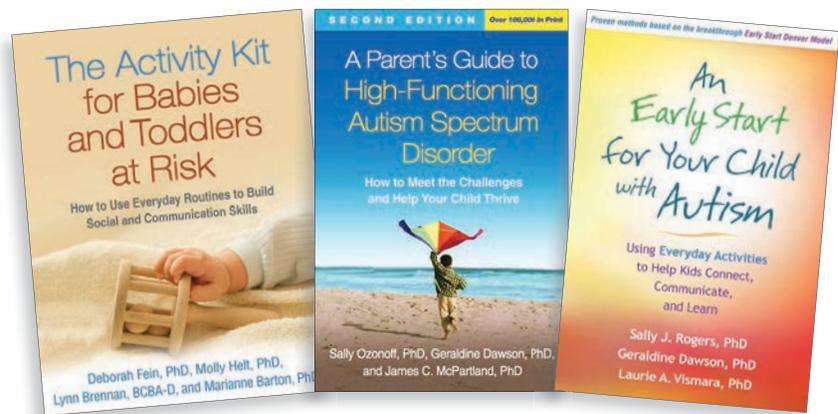
"This is the book I have been waiting for—one I can recommend without reservation to parents of children newly diagnosed with autism. It is full of all the facts and practical information that families need to understand the causes of autism and get their child on the right treatment path."

—Alison Singer, President, Autism Science Foundation

"From some of the most outstanding clinical scientists in the field, this book is a treasure to be read by every family whose lives have been touched by autism, and by every clinical and educational provider who wants the very best for their clients."

—Ami Klin, PhD, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University School of Medicine

See Also



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Areas of expertise include: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder, Non-Verbal Learning Disorder (NVLD)

Our approach:

Complete.

We develop a complete picture of the child's skills to inform our strengths-based approach across assessment and treatment.

Comprehensive.

From early identification to ongoing support, we provide comprehensive services including behavioral therapy, medication when appropriate, speech and language services, case management and school consultation.

Integrated.

Clinical experience enriches research and research rigor heightens clinical care. Every family we see makes a difference for many others through our research, including ongoing NIMH-funded studies of brain development in infants and toddlers.

Compassionate.

We enable families to access care that meets their needs and monitor response to treatment without having to search for a host of providers.

To learn more about our clinical care or study participation at our new center, contact appointments@childmind.org or **(212) 308-3118**.

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To learn more, contact Erin MacDonnell at erin.macdonnell@yale.edu or 203-737-3439



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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE AUTISM SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The Marcus Autism Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University School of Medicine thanks the Autism Science Foundation for their contributions to autism research. Together, we improve the lives of people with autism and make brighter futures possible.



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