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## Foundation Goals

The objectives of the Canadian National Autism Foundation are charitable. The Canadian National Autism Foundation has been formed to provide funding for:

- \* Educating the general public and professionals;
- \* Providing information and resources to families of children with autism;
- \* Providing funding for Canadian based research and development; and
- \* Promoting national autism awareness

## Mission Statement

The Canadian National Autism Foundation promotes the positive improvement and quality of life for people with autism in Canada.

## Ongoing Fundraisers

New CNAF Bracelets!

Be part of the latest trend!

They would make a wonderful and attractive addition to any gift, while at the same time promoting autism awareness!

\$4.00 each (+ shipping & handling)



## Upcoming CNAF Events

*Friends of CNAF Present*

*A Fashion Show*

*February 12, 2006*

*Carmen's Banquet Hall, Hamilton, ON*

*For tickets contact Tina*

*905-643-7183*

## Upcoming Events

*6<sup>th</sup> Annual Silent Auction & Brunch*

*Sunday, April 30, 2006*

*Chandelier Place, Stoney Creek, ON*

*For Tickets or to donate a prize*

*Call Tina at 905-643-7183*

## **Ask the Expert**

Parents who have just received the diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder for their child, go through a bevy of emotions, and often do not know where to turn first, or what to do first. We have been receiving a large number of questions about this, and we hope that the following information will assist you with where to begin.

### **Finding Out**

Getting the "official" or "unofficial" word that your child has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)/Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) can be devastating. Parents tend to handle this time, plus the period immediately following in different ways. Most of us grieve for the child/adolescent/adult we dreamed up when we first found out about the pregnancy.

The one thing that is so important to know is that autism is not caused by poor parenting! Your child is not just "stubborn", "bad" or "lazy", and neither are you.

At this time, try to utilize the resources available to you. It may be helpful for you to receive some counseling and/or to join a support group.

As soon as you can handle it, start making phone calls. Initially (and dependant on your child's age) you should call Early Intervention Services and get hooked up with a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) and an Occupation Therapist (OT) (a large percentage of kids on the spectrum have a sensory integration dysfunction). You will also want to start applying for funding (in Ontario, Canada this includes Special Services at Home, Assistance for Children with Severe Handicaps, Easter Seals [for diapers], in Ontario, be sure to apply for the new Autism Initiative. You may also be eligible to receive some money off certain items such as communication devices.

While on wait lists for services, there are more things you can do. Research some interventions (therapies).

### **Getting Started**

1. Contact Early Intervention (for preschool age)
2. Find a Speech-Language Pathologist (SL-P)
3. Find an Occupational Therapist to determine if there is a sensory integration problem
4. Arrange for a neurologist to administer an EEG to rule out seizure disorder
5. Look at some different therapies/interventions
6. Join a support group for parents of kids with ASD. If necessary, get counseling for yourself. This is a challenging road and you may need some help.
7. Find out about receiving respite.
8. Surf the Internet...do research...read books...talk to other parents. A great place for manuals and books is Parent Books. Located in Toronto, this store stocks a vast amount of books on special needs. You can also order online.
9. MOST IMPORTANTLY... Love your ASD child, while making sure to remember your spouse and other children, as well as yourself. You are important to your child's successes, don't ignore your own health or well-being.

(adapted from [www.bbbautism.com](http://www.bbbautism.com))

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Submit questions to our experts via email at [cnaf\\_autism@hotmail.com](mailto:cnaf_autism@hotmail.com), by phone at 950-643-7183, by fax at 905-643-0969, or via mail at 1227 Barton Street East, PO Box 47577, Hamilton, ON L8H 2V0

The Canadian National Autism Foundation will attempt to have all questions answered in a timely manner, and to ensure that names are kept confidential. Not all questions posed will be published in a particular issue. The Canadian National Autism Foundation is not responsible for the responses given by the expert to questions posed through this outlet, and we encourage you to consult with other experts for additional advice and information.

## Interesting Information About Seizures & Autism

### **Autism, Puberty, and the Possibility of Seizures**

Written by Stephen M. Edelson, Ph.D.

Center for the Study of Autism, Salem, Oregon

About one in four autistic individuals begin to have seizures during puberty. The exact reason for the onset of seizures is not known, but it is likely that the seizure activity may be due to hormonal changes in the body. Sometimes these seizures are noticeable, (i.e., associated with convulsions); but for many, they are small, sub-clinical seizures, and are typically not detected by simple observation.

Some possible signs of sub-clinical seizure activity include:

- \*exhibiting behavior problems, such as aggression, self-injury, and severe tantrumming;
- \*making little or no academic gains after doing well during childhood and pre-teen years; and/or losing some behavioral and/or cognitive gains.

Personally, I have known a few autistic individuals who were considered high-functioning prior to puberty. During puberty, they experienced seizures, which were not treated. By their late teens, they were considered, however, as low functioning.

Some parents have an EEG performed to see if their child shows any seizure activity.

However, even if the EEG does not detect abnormal activity during the testing period, one cannot conclude that the person does not have seizures. To increase the likelihood of detection, some individuals are assessed with an EEG for 24 to 48 hours.

Interestingly, vitamin B6 with magnesium, as well as dimethylglycine (DMG) are known to reduce or eliminate seizure activity in some individuals, even in cases where seizure drugs are ineffective.

Note that the majority of autistic individuals do not have seizures during puberty. In fact, many parents have told me that their son/daughter actually experienced a dramatic developmental leap forward during this period.

Parents of autistic children should be aware of the possible positive and negative changes that can occur with puberty. Of particular importance is the need for parents to be cognizant of the fact that about 25% of autistic individuals may experience clinical or sub-clinical seizures, which, if left untreated, can lead to deleterious effects.

Excerpt from

<http://www.autism.org/seizures.html>

## **How to Contact Us**

### ***Mailing Address***

1227 Barton Street East,  
PO Box 47577  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8H 2V0

### ***Phone Number***

905-643-7183

### ***Fax Number***

905-643-0969

### ***Email Addresses***

cnaf\_autism@hotmail.com  
info@cnaf.net

### ***Website Address***

www.cnaf.net

## **How You Can Help**

As a charitable organization, the Canadian National Autism Foundation strives to raise funds to achieve our goals and it is with the support of generous organizations, companies and people that we are able to put together fundraising events such as those we have had in the past in order to raise the funding needed.

At this time we are looking for financial support, and this can come in various forms:

- Sponsorship of portions of our events
- Donations of prizes for our events
- Purchase of tickets to our events
- Financial contributions directly towards our goals (i.e. research)

Charitable Organization  
#867189243 RR0001

Check out our new Message Board at [www.cnaf.net](http://www.cnaf.net)  
Order our new merchandise online at [www.cnaf.net](http://www.cnaf.net), and pay using PayPal

## **In our Upcoming Issue**

**Ask the Expert** about ... we want to hear from you. Who would you like to hear from, and what questions have you always wanted to ask. Email us your questions, and we will find an expert to answer them.

**Interesting Information** ... something new and exciting!

### **Disclaimer**

The Canadian National Autism Foundation (CNAF) does not support, endorse or recommend any method, treatment, product, program or person for people suffering with autism spectrum disorders. The goal of our site and our responses to your questions is to provide accurate and up-to-date information about autism spectrum disorders. We believe everyone has the right to access all of the information available to them, allowing them to make their own individual choice.