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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.

### Upcoming Events

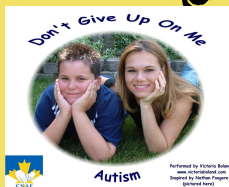
*Autism Fashion Show with  
8<sup>th</sup> Annual Silent Auction & Brunch  
April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008*

*featuring some of our special children with autism*

*Tickets \$25.00 each, Children (under 10) \$15.00*

*Look for more information on our website at  
<http://www.cnaf.net/upcoming.html>*

## *Exciting News!*



*"Don't Give Up On Me (Autism)" CD  
is going around the world!*

It is featured on the "M.T.M. compilation #19" CD by Mark Trail, and being sent to over 600 worldwide radio stations.

Mailing Address: 1227 Barton Street East, PO Box 47577, Hamilton, Ontario, L8H 2V0  
Phone: 905-643-7183 Fax: 905-643-0969

## **Ask the Expert**

### **The Importance of Using Visual Supports**

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#### **A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words**

(excerpted from York Region District School Board,  
Autism Team Newsletter, April 2006)

**Most students learn from what they hear, what they see, and what they touch with their hands. Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders learn differently. Research has shown that children with Autism Spectrum Disorders are visual learners which means they understand what they see better than what they hear. When we use visual supports for students with ASD, we capitalize on their stronger skill area and assist them in using their more adept skills to compensate for their areas of difficulty.**

**A visual support is something you can see that enhances the understanding of a spoken message. Calendars, schedules, maps and signs are visual supports. Visual supports enable students with ASD to learn more quickly, reduce challenging behaviours, decrease frustration and anxiety and gain independence.**

#### **Tips for Implementing Visual Supports**

- **The representation must match the student's ability level and be easily understood by both the child and others in his/her environment. This will increase the immediate effectiveness of the visual tools.**
- **Be aware of the visual supports continuum of complexity: Real objects/ Mini objects/ Photographs/ Picture Communication Symbols/ Pictures/ Drawings/ Words.**
- **The representation should be easy to find or make.**
- **Keep visual supports clear and concise.**
- **Remember the students need to be taught to use the visual tools.**
- **Use the visual tool consistently when you are attempting to establish its use.**
- **Review, review, review! It is important to use them regularly to talk about what is happening.**
- **Modify the visual tool as it becomes obvious that changes are necessary**
- **NEVER stop using visual supports! The student is successful because you have provided him with visual supports, and taught him how to use the visual support.**

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#### **Sites with more information about Visual Supports**

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

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

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

## Interesting Information

### Update on the Early Signs of Autism Study

By Dr. Melissa Rutherford  
McMaster University

We at the Rutherford Lab at McMaster University would like to thank everyone for your help! We have seen over 30 infants in our early autism study and are developing some markers of typical development in infancy.

We have found that typically, 3 month old infants would rather look at faces with eyes directed towards them than away from them. Six month old infants prefer to look at face images rather than images matched in complexity, and they prefer to look at the eye region of the face more than the mouth.

Even more exciting, we have discovered that children who are later diagnosed with autism show different patterns of looking at 12 months. Compared to babies who prefer to watch dots that are playing and chasing, those babies who look at two non-interacting dots are more likely have an autism diagnosis a year later. Finding these early signs of autism will help identify children who need to be screened. We know that children with autism who are diagnosed earlier have better outcomes. We are still continuing to collect data for nine and twelve month olds, as well as recruiting new 3 month old participants. We appreciate those of you who have continued to attend our experimental sessions with your infants!!

We are also continuing to recruit infants with a history of autism or Asperger's syndrome in their families. We will compare the results of those with a family history of autism to those without a history, so that we can find early markers of autism.

If you have a young infant and a history of autism in the family, please phone us at 905 525-9140 ext. 26032 to set up a time to visit us!

Website <http://www.mdrutherford.com/>

Submit questions to our experts via email at [info@cnaf.net](mailto:info@cnaf.net), 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.

# Other Interesting Studies Looking for Participants

The Rutherford Lab invites you to take part in

## The Sticker Study

We are studying 4-6 year olds to see how they solve problems!

- Each child will work with the experimenters to make a picture with stickers.
- The child is given simple instructions and a problem to solve.
- Each child is paid for participating.



Ultimately we want to see how children differ in their problem solving skills.

Please help us by calling 905  
525 9140 ext 26032 !

Rutherford Lab  
McMaster University  
Department of Psychology,  
Neuroscience and Behaviour  
Phone: 905 525 9140  
Ext. 26032



## How to Contact Us

### ***Mailing Address***

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### ***Phone Number***

905-643-7183

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905-643-0969

### ***Email Address***

info@cnaaf.net

### ***Website Address***

www.cnaaf.net

### ***Charitable Organization***

#867189243 RR0001

## 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)
- Hold an Autism Awareness Day at your establishment
- Casual Dress Days
- Payroll Deductions
- Host a Golf Tournament or Hockey Tournament
- Sponsor or run a Walk-a-thon
- And any other great ideas that you may have, big or small!



### Ongoing Fundraisers

Do you buy books about Autism or any other topics online?  
Buy them through the Amazon.ca link on our site, and the CNAF will receive a percentage of your sale from Amazon.ca

### 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.