

March 2007

Sonnenberg Consultants Newsletter

"It's Peeing." (Spencer trying to say, it's P.E.)

Research Updates

Autism linked to gene, region of a chromosome

By Joyce Howard Price

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

February 25, 2007

A global research coalition has found preliminary evidence that suggests an individual gene and region of a chromosome are linked to the development of autism.

The study by the Autism Genome Project (AGP) -- a consortium that includes 137 scientists from more than 50 research centers in 19 countries -- was the largest of its kind ever conducted.

The findings were published online last week in Nature Genetics. They are to appear in the print version of that journal next month.

The study used "gene chip" technology to search for similarities in the DNA of autistic children whose families had at least two members with the complex brain disorder.

Autism, which is usually not diagnosed until after age 3, inhibits a person's ability to communicate and form social relationships. It is often accompanied by extreme behavioral problems.

Earlier this month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, estimated that one in 150 U.S. children are autistic, a figure higher than previously thought.

Researchers in the study found a gene called neurexin 1, which they say appears to have a role in susceptibility for autism. Neurexin 1 is in a family of genes involved with the neurotransmitter glutamate. Defects in glutamate function previously have been implicated in autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

The researchers also identified a section of chromosome 11 that may contain a gene that could predispose someone to autism. That specific gene has not yet been pinpointed.

"We have known for years that autism is a strongly genetic disorder. This study helps us to significantly advance research into genetic mechanisms," said Dr. Fred Volkmar, a professor of child psychiatry, pediatrics and psychology at Yale University, an author of the report.

Ami Klin, another author who helps Dr. Volkmar run Yale's autism program, said: "The discovery of genes associated with autism and their interactions should now set in motion an even stronger effort to develop new pharmacological treatments [for autism] to change the natural course" of this disease.

Autism rates have increased tenfold in the past decade, reflecting increased awareness, a broadening of the definition and better educational services. The AGP was formed in 2002 to enhance collaboration to find the cause of the disease.

AGP researchers theorize there may be five or six primary genes responsible for autism, and that 30 or more other genes could be involved in its development.

The research was funded by the nonprofit group Autism Speaks, which promotes autism awareness and raises money for autism research.

Classifieds

Help needed for a family in Milwaukee. The location is around Mayfair mall. Please let your senior know if you are interested.

MVP of this month is...

Rachel Carr-This tutor has gone over and beyond with helping out at so many homes! She is dedicated to helping out at the last minute and has become such a versatile therapist. Rachel has such a great attitude and never complains! Thanks so much Rachel for all of your hard work and dedication, it has not gone unnoticed!

Media Updates

Toys "R" Us Announces National Partnership with Autism Speaks

World's Greatest Toy Store Helps Raise Funds and Awareness for Nation's Fastest-Growing Developmental Disorder through Sponsorship of Autism Walk Events And In-Store Fundraising Campaign

April's status as Autism Awareness Month, long promoted nationally by the autism community, has been recognized in a resolution adopted the United States Senate. In appropriations news, Reps. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), Mike Doyle (D-Penn.) and Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.) this week asked their fellow members of the House of Representatives to sign on to two letters seeking federal funding for autism activities.

Autism Speaks has inaugurated an awareness initiative that will provide pediatricians with updated information about diagnosing and treating gastrointestinal problems in their patients who have autism. More than 43,000 physicians across the country will receive a consensus statement that includes specific recommendations for evaluating patients, along with a letter from Mark Roithmayr, president of Autism Speaks.

A very talented 14-year-old sibling of a young boy with autism, Madison Georgi, a singer/songwriter from Pittsburgh, PA has released Her first single, "Take My Hands" a fundraiser for Autism Link!!! Written for her brother with autism spectrum disorder, Madison, also known as "Maddie" she has written and recorded this fabulous song!! Her Angelic voice coupled with a Baptist choir is sure to move you!!!

For only \$2, this single is for sale at the Autism Link Store at <http://www.autismlink.com/store>

For a sample of the song, visit: <https://www.autismlink.com/Madison/TakeMyHand.mp3>

'Fighting' for Autism Speaks



John Ondrasik, lead singer of pop super group Five For Fighting, has launched a new web site as part of a fundraising effort to support Autism Speaks and other charities.

Company Policies

- Parent input is also welcome in nominating the MVP of each month. Just let your senior or Farrah know.
- Our website is up and running! SonnenbergConsultants.com.
- All raises are in effect; if you have not received a raise please talk to your senior!

Joke of the Month

Q: what is the longest word in the dictionary?

A: the word smiles because there is a mile between each s.

Happy Birthdays to...

Ericka Steinmetz-25 yrs old!
Matthew H.-Wow he's getting old!
Farrah Sonnenberg-she's 30!

Projects to help with...

-Help us make a name for our company!
We are going to add a phrase that will follow Sonnenberg Consultants and if you win then you will receive a prize. Be creative and have fun! Ask your senior for details.



Spencer and Marie



Jason and Ericka



Maurice

Have a great Month!
Sonnenberg Consultants