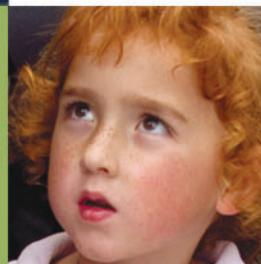
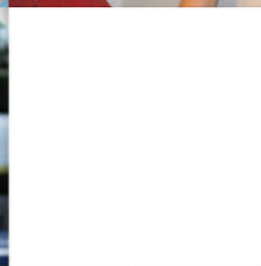




Accomplishments 2010



AUTISM SPEAKS®
It's time to listen.

Science



- The Suzanne and Bob Wright Trailblazer Awards were inaugurated to accelerate the pace of autism scientific discovery and honor the organization's pioneering founders. In 2010, three Trailblazer Awards funded potentially transformative projects that held the promise of clearing away significant roadblocks to autism research within the year.



- One Trailblazer researcher is now inserting stem cells from autism brain tissues into mice, to study how autism-affected brain cells function in a living brain. If successful, this could open the door to an important new method for understanding the biological basis of autism spectrum disorders.



- Another investigator is exploring what may be a previously unrecognized cause of autism: a virus passed between parent and child during conception. This in turn may lead to interventions that could prevent or treat one type of autism.



- The third investigator is expanding our understanding of how even mild mitochondrial disorders (affecting the powerhouses of a cell) may affect brain development and inflammation, and how controlling this cascade of events might prevent or treat certain types of autism.

- Autism Speaks continued its Dennis Weatherstone Predoctoral Fellowships by supporting the education and research of nine new doctoral students pursuing careers in autism research under the guidance of the field's leading scientists.

- In the prestigious journal *Nature*, investigators from Autism Speaks' Autism Genome Project (AGP) published on major discoveries of new autism risk genes. These included gene mutations that involved distinctive deletions and duplications of DNA – rare in the general population but more common among individuals with autism. Of particular interest, many of these autism risk genes occurred in children with autism but not in their parents – meaning that the mutations arose “de novo,” or spontaneously, in a parent's sex cell (egg or sperm) or after conception.

- The AGP investigators also discovered that some autism risk genes directly affect the development of vital brain cells, or neurons, whereas others affect the function of mature neurons – for example the cells' ability to communicate with each other.

- Autism Speaks launched the Translational Medicine Research Initiative with the goal of turning biological findings into practical diagnostic and treatment methods. Among other things, the Initiative will concentrate on identifying autism mechanisms and pathways that can be addressed with targeted drugs and other interventions that improve the function and health of affected individuals.

- Publishing in the esteemed journal *Pediatrics*, physicians in Autism Speaks' Autism Treatment Network (ATN) provided the wider healthcare community with evidence-based guidelines for the evaluation and treatment of gastrointestinal (GI) problems in children with autism. These recommendations include practical and detailed information, the diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of a variety of GI problems frequently seen in children on the autism spectrum.



- Autism Speaks expanded its Global Autism Public Health (GAPH) initiative in partnership with the World Health Organization to advance autism advocacy, research and capacity-building around the world. Under the leadership of GAPH partners, Autism Speaks facilitated the establishment of the Southeast Europe Autism Network and the launch of new South African, Serbian, and Brazilian partnerships.
- Autism Speaks conducted an Outcomes Survey asking researchers how our funding helped advance autism science. The results demonstrated that the vast majority of researchers made new and meaningful discoveries. These discoveries covered a broad range of goals from the identification of biological mechanisms and risk factors to new treatments. Researchers also reported that for each dollar invested by Autism Speaks, they were able to leverage an average of \$10 in additional project funding. So in total, an Autism Speaks' initial investment of about \$10 million yielded close to \$100 million in additional funding for research.

Awareness

- Autism Speaks' public service advertising campaign, "Learn the Signs," enter its fifth year and became the number one Ad Council campaign in donated media. The campaign has garnered over \$258 million in donated media since its inception, leading to a dramatic increase in autism awareness and understanding nationwide.
- Autism Speaks kicked off the third World Autism Awareness Day by launching its first *Light It Up Blue* campaign on April 1 and 2. Over 200 buildings, schools and landmarks around the world lit up blue to raise awareness of autism. The Empire State Building, 30 Rockefeller Center, Niagara Falls, the New York Stock Exchange, and many other iconic sights, helped shine a bright light on autism.
- On September 22, at the start of the 65th United Nations General Assembly in New York City, first spouses and dignitaries from around the world took part in the Autism Speaks *Third Annual World Focus on Autism*. The forum was co-hosted by Suzanne and Bob Wright and Dee and Tommy Hilfiger. They were joined by Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, wife of the U.N. Secretary-General, and first spouses from around the world for a discussion on solutions to the global autism crisis.
- Autism Speaks re-launched the Autism Speaks U website with new tools for college students to create events, programs and Autism U chapters. To date, Autism Speaks U has close to 30 chapters and works with hundreds of colleges across the country to plan autism awareness events.

AutismSpeaks.org

Family Services



- Autism Speaks took part in the first bi-partisan Congressional briefing on autism as an organizational chair of Advancing Futures for Adults with Autism (AFAA), a consortium of leading autism advocacy organizations and service providers. The goal of the National Public Policy Agenda was to inspire legislative action to meet the increasing and unmet demand for effective services for adolescents and adults with the disorder.



- Autism Speaks launched three new tool kits in 2010. Designed to help families address the needs of their loved ones affected by autism, the new kits included:



- The Asperger Syndrome/High Functioning Autism Tool Kit. Based upon requests from families, Autism Speaks engaged individuals with Asperger Syndrome and high-functioning autism, their family members and autism professionals to develop the tool kit, which provides a road map and strategies for those who have that diagnosis.



- The Dental Tool Kit. Autism Speaks teamed with Colgate and Philips-Sonicare to create a dental guide and video, which provides tips for improving oral hygiene and information on making a trip to the dentist less stressful and more productive.

- Version 2.0 of the 100 Day Kit for newly diagnosed families. This version was updated based upon feedback from families who had received the Tool Kit and helps families navigate the first few months after a child's diagnosis of autism.

- Autism Speaks introduced the Baker Summer Camp Program, a new grant initiative that provides funding to camps so that financially disadvantaged individuals with autism may attend summer camp. Grants were provided to 51 camps, resulting in more than 330 scholarships for campers.
- AutismCares gave financial awards to 72 families in 26 states. Managed by Autism Speaks and made up of several autism organizations, AutismCares provides funds to families affected by autism to cover costs associated with critical living expenses or those that experienced a natural disaster such as floods, or a hurricane.

Government Relations

- Autism Speaks' advocacy efforts helped to enact autism insurance legislation in eight states: Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, and Vermont, bringing the total to 27 states. These vital new laws, which went into effect in 2011, will affect state-regulated plans, requiring health insurance policies to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders.
- At the end of 2010, Autism Speaks worked with Senators Christopher Dodd (D-CT) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) to introduce the vital Combating Autism Reauthorization Act of 2010 (CARA). Due for reauthorization by September 30, 2011, CARA would build upon the success of the Combating Autism Act of 2006 by reaffirming the federal response to autism.



- Autism Speaks launched a significant grassroots campaign in 2010 to press for the enactment of the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2009. The bill would enable the family of a child with a disability to save for the child's future without fear of losing federal benefits such as Medicaid. At the end of 2010, there were 203 sponsors in the House and 24 sponsors in the Senate.

Fundraising

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- Autism Speaks' largest fundraiser, *Walk Now for Autism Speaks*, with sponsors Toys“R”Us and Babies“R”Us, raised \$25.9 million in 82 events across North America. Over 340,000 people joined together with family and friends to participate in events to help raise funds and awareness, and show their support for the autism community.
- Two hundred and twenty donors contributed \$7.7 million to research, fellowships, summer camp scholarships, Family Services or general support. Highlights include the renewal of the \$1 million contribution for research from the Allerton Foundation; a \$1 million donation from Sumner Redstone; and a campaign to help establish the Suzanne and Bob Wright Trailblazers Award which raised over \$1 million thanks to 61 donors.
- More than \$6 million was raised through Autism Speaks corporate partnerships. Toys“R”Us and Babies“R”Us led the fundraising efforts, raising \$2.5 million throughout North America during Autism Awareness Month, and fashion retailer T.J. Maxx raised nearly \$1.1 million at 800 store locations nationwide.
- Autism Speaks hosted numerous special events, including the sold-out *Fourth Annual Autism Speaks to Wall Street: A Celebrity Chef Gala, Tip-Off for a Cure*, and the *12th Annual Autism Speaks New York Celebrity Golf Challenge*, among many others. Together, these highly successful events raised over \$5.7 million.
- While many organizations in the non-profit sector saw only a two percent growth in revenue in 2010, Autism Speaks grew by over 10 percent.