

# Autism Research Institute's Accomplishments in 2015

## Outreach

- ARI now offers, in joint providership with the Cleveland Clinic, complimentary webcasts offering *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* to physicians and the general public on gastrointestinal, medical, metabolic, and neurological comorbidities in autism. Thousands of viewers have tuned in over the last 12 months since the online series was released.
- ARI was instrumental in the publication of the 50th anniversary edition of Dr. Bernard Rimland's ground-breaking book, *Infantile Autism*. Numerous researchers contributed updates to the book on many of the topics covered by Dr. Rimland.
- ARI was also instrumental in the publication of an edited book on understanding and treating self-injurious behavior. Medical, neurological (i.e., seizures), immune, nutrition, sensory, and behavioral issues are discussed. The book will be released by Jessica Kingsley Publishers next year (2016).
- ARI's adult program, the Autistic Global Initiative:
  - hosts an online employment course.
  - was honored by the Autism Society National Conference with the Adam Heavner Memorial Award for Employer of the Year, presented to an organization or company that has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the advancement, effective transition, or meaningful employment of an individual on the autism spectrum.
  - publishes a quarterly e-newsletter focused on topics related to adults.
  - oversees a 12-week comprehensive course on daily living/residential course training for direct-support providers for adults on the autism spectrum.
  - premiered an Internet portal, [www.autism.jobs](http://www.autism.jobs), on employment for those on the spectrum, parents, and potential employers. The website provides relevant information and guidance on finding and preparing for a job.
  - continued work on a trauma video and completed filming a documentary on sensory issues.
- ARI offers a hotline for parents and professionals, who can reach a live person for information and support at 866-366-3361 (toll free) and at 619-281-7165 (San Diego).
- ARI sponsors three to four webinars featuring top researchers and treatment professionals on the Internet each month. The topics include diet, nutrition, ABA, assessment, educational therapies, adults, and much more. Participants can receive a free Certificate of Participation for most webinars. Visit our webinar portal at [www.AutismWebinars.org](http://www.AutismWebinars.org).
- ARI's YouTube channel offers free access to experts through more than 100 hours of free, up-to-date webcasts on medical support and educational videos, social stories, and selected talks from past conferences—viewers have tuned in for nearly 120,000 viewings in the last 24 months at [www.AutismYouTube.com](http://www.AutismYouTube.com).
- ARI moderates several Internet discussion groups for parents.
- ARI translates many of our publications and surveys into French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and other languages.

- ARI publishes a quarterly e-newsletter titled focused on individuals on the autism spectrum who are deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired.
- ARI publishes a bimonthly e-newsletter titled *Clinical Research in Autism* for obstetricians, pediatricians, and nurses who want to keep up to date with research relevant to their practice.

## **Research**

- ARI awarded more than \$300,000 in grants to scientists whose work will have a direct impact on the lives of those on the autism spectrum. The funds supported research in immune, gastrointestinal, metabolic, neurological, and sensory issues.
- Since the mid-1960s, ARI has been collecting data regarding developmental history and symptoms. A recent analysis of over 40,000 cases revealed 10 to 12 subtypes of autism. We finished data collection on a follow-up study this year to see if we can replicate these findings.
- We continue to publish our quarterly science newsletter, *Autism Research Review International (ARRI)*, summarizing current medical, sensory, and educational research.
- We sponsored a major think tank, attended by researchers and experienced medical clinicians. In order to make progress in the field, ARI knows it is critical for scientists and experienced clinicians to meet and discuss issues related to treatment.
- We organized two regional, multidisciplinary think tanks (Boston and New York).
- We support an active dialogue among researchers and clinicians in a private Internet discussion group limited to those with advanced science degrees and extensive autism experience.
- ARI helps fund two tissue banks, including a whole-body tissue bank for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at the University of Maryland, and a gastrointestinal tissue bank at the Digestive Function Laboratory Repository at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.
- Dr. Edelson, ARI's director, worked on several research projects this year, consisting of studies on sub-typing autism, self-injurious behavior, and understanding and treating vision and hearing dysfunction.
- ARI co-funded an expert panel that determined early identification is essential to ensure appropriate access to specialized evidence-based interventions aimed at optimizing long-term outcomes and published its findings in the October *Pediatrics*.

## **International Outreach**

- ARI is an NGO (non-government organization) of the United Nations.
- For the third straight year, ARI co-sponsored a major international conference in Moscow.
- Early next year we will premiere several webcasts, produced in collaboration with the Cleveland Clinic, in foreign languages including Spanish, Japanese, and Portuguese.
- We continue to translate many of our key articles as well as translate our Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC) into different languages—the ATEC is now available in 18 languages online.