



Autism
Behavioural
Intervention
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ABIQ NEWS

Sep 04

*Autism Behavioural Intervention Queensland (ABIQ) was formed to enhance the treatment of children with autism. It is the belief of ABIQ that children with autism are best treated by Applied Behavioural Analysis. This therapy gives children with autism a chance – a **chance** to grow, to live and to lead a fulfilling and independent life.*

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Applied Behavioural Analysis Information Day

Sunday October 3rd
QUT, Kelvin Grove
9am – 5pm

Presenters:

Leslie Workmon
(Clinical Director, ABAQ)

Kathleen Davey
(Early Intervention Psychologist, NSW Govt)

Tracey Grose
(Support worker, Adult Services
Autism Queensland)

Mogens Johansen

The target audience will be university students interested in working with children with autism.
Parents are welcome to attend.

For more information, visit www.abiq.org
RSVP for handouts and catering purposes
ph.3264 2582 or coordinator@abiq.org

Morning and afternoon tea supplied.
BYO lunch

President's Column

by Michael Chan

On behalf of the new committee I want to extend a warm welcome to everyone who has renewed (or intends to renew) their ABIQ membership for another year. With your support I am confident that we can continue to assist families of young children with autism to implement an effective early intervention program.

At this year's annual general meeting, I listened to the president's report delivered by Maria (as she stood down from her 2 year term as President) and reflected on her achievements over the term. What ABIQ achieved under her leadership was indeed impressive. I must admit it is a hard act to follow!

I want to express my appreciation to Maria Carroll and Richard Keylock for their tireless effort during their terms as President and Vice President. We are very fortunate that they have agreed to stay on as committee members and I am sure ABIQ will benefit enormously from their experience.

I also want to thank the other people who are volunteering their time and energy to be part of the new ABIQ committee. The ABIQ Committee for 2004-05 is as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| ▪ President | Michael Chan |
| ▪ Vice-president | Bianca Joe-Kong |
| ▪ Secretary | Kylie Graham |
| ▪ Treasurer | Fiona Treadwell |
| ▪ Committee members | Mogens Johansen, Dee Brough, Maria Carroll,
Richard Keylock, Des Sipos, Belinda Harris |

It would be remiss of me not to thank Carmel Grasso, Yvonne Moulds, and Zhimin Zhan for their efforts in the previous committee. While they have each resigned from the committee, I want to acknowledge their help in making some of our past activities the outstanding successes that they were. Zhimin has volunteered to stay on as ABIQ's web master.

So where will ABIQ be in 12 months time? I believe it is important for us to focus on our ultimate goal of ***“helping families of young children with autism implement an effective early intervention program”***. To achieve this goal, ABIQ would, amongst other activities, continue to:

- Raise community awareness of autism and Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) as an effective early intervention program.
- Organise information seminars and workshops on early intervention options, including ABA.
- Assist families to implement their early intervention programs (e.g. ABA therapist register, library resources, training materials, emotional support etc.).

To enable ABIQ to provide the much needed services to families, ABIQ would continue to raise funds through grant applications and the organization of fund raising events.

Feedback from the 2004 Autism Conference in May this year has highlighted the needs of families living in rural and regional areas of the Queensland. While those living in and around Brisbane have reasonably easy access to professionals and other related facilities, families in rural and regional areas have expressed the difficulties they have encountered when trying to implement an early intervention program for their children with autism. For this reason, we have decided to progressively extend ABIQ's activities to families in rural and regional areas of Queensland.

I am under no illusion that it will be very challenging to carry out all the activities we have planned for the coming year. For committee members and other helpers, it will mean countless hours of volunteer work and a lot of juggling between ABIQ and other life commitments, including the needs our own families. It will be very stressful at times. I therefore urge ABIQ members to understand the circumstances upon which ABIQ operates and I hope you will be patient with ABIQ if, at times, the level of service is below what you expect.

To help ease the overall work load, you may even consider volunteering your time on sub-committees for specific projects (e.g. the 2005 Charity Gala Ball). I am sure you will find the experience rewarding and it may even turn out to be an opportunity for personal development and growth.

Over the next 12 months, I hope to meet as many members as possible at various ABIQ events. In the mean time I welcome any comments or feedback you may have to help us improve the effectiveness of ABIQ.

The 'experts' saw a child in a "world of his own" ...
 I see the brightest ray of sunshine.
 They saw a child who "may never speak" ...
 I see a gift that needs no words.
 They saw a child with "limited possibility" ...
 I see a child, my child who can soar past the heavens ...

Formation of the Bayside District

Facilitated Communication

Users Network

We would like to contact parents, carers, teachers, teacher aides and anyone else who supports facilitated communication users who attend schools in the Bayside Education District.

Our aim is to identify the challenges that our children face, opportunities available to them, and unmet needs. Some of our goals include:

- Improvements in facilitator training and support structures in schools;
- Smoother transitions for FC users between school years and between settings;
- Peer support for FC users, their parents and carers, and school staff.
- Opportunities for professional networking and information exchange amongst teachers and teacher aides supporting students in mainstream and special schools.

Darling Point Special School is currently undertaking a project with financial support from **AGOSCI** to explore ways to meet these goals for students, families, carers and school staff. The school welcomes contact from families interested in finding about this project. Contact: Charmaine Driver by phone: 073 396 2053 or by email: cdriv4@eq.edu.au.

What my Autism Means to Me

It means loving without the desire to be touched.

Trying to make friends without wanting them.

Trying to communicate without words and not really understanding the meanings anyway.

People want us to be "normal" but we are normal to us.

Undertaking this world is so hard when reality is so confusing.

Try to forgive me if I hurt you.

The truth is I just want to go away and love you my way.

By Mia Brownrigg age 9



Book Review

“Treating Autism - Parent Stories of Hope and Success”
 edited by Stephen M Edelson, PhD and Bernard Rimland, Phd..

I have just finished reading a great book “Treating Autism - Parent Stories of Hope and Success” edited by Stephen M Edelson, PhD and Bernard Rimland, Phd..

I read stories from parents about children who had recovered and other children who had made remarkable improvements through biomedical interventions. Most people highly recommend the gluten/casein free diet and others recommend the Feingold diet. The Feingold diet was developed to help children with ADD and ADHD but also helps children with ASD. It removed artificial colours, artificial flavours, certain preservatives and natural foods high in salicylates from the diet.

ABA scored well and helped lots of children on their way to recovery. Most of the children started talking soon after starting ABA.

Most parents, even those who are medical practitioners, think immunisation was a contributing factor to their child’s autism.

It was very encouraging to read letters from parents of older children and adults who have made great progress with vitamin therapy using B6 and DMG. Some of the improvements seen in the children and adults were: onset of speech, increased speech, sleeping through the night, stopped seizures, stopped arm biting, outburst free days.

After reading these letters I am going to try these vitamins again with Matthew. I did try them a few years ago but I am going to give it another go.

The main message in the book is NEVER GIVE UP – THERE IS HOPE!!!

Thanks to Sharon Horan for this review. This book is available for borrowing from the ABIQ Resource Collection.

ABIQ is planning workshops and seminars for 2005. Some of these will develop aspects of Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) in greater detail. We are considering the possible inclusion of other autism-related topics.

The best way to stay informed about ABI Q’s workshop program is by checking our website regularly. All upcoming events are posted there. You can use the ABI Q Forum (link from home page) to let us know your needs or suggestions.

What's New???? Information from the lists

I subscribe to a number of ABA email groups. Each week my inbox is filled with the comments, tips and questions from parents, teachers and therapists of people with autism around the world (mainly USA, being the home of ABA). While I don't always have time to read the posts, I learn a great deal from sharing the joys, sorrows and insights of these people with whom I share a common bond. My favourites are DTT-NET, Verbal Behaviour, Autism-ABA and of course the ME List. For those who are not into the lists, here is just some of the useful information I have learned in the last few months to share with you:

- **Actions DVDs** – a new product from CE Films www.cefilms.com
A way of teaching actions using movie clips rather than flashcards.
Great for generalisation and reported to be very reinforcing.
- **DAN (Defeat Autism Now) Conference**
The Fall DAN Conference will be held October 1 - 3 in Los Angeles.
This will be the biggest and best DAN Conference ever.
For the first time ever, a group of recovered autistic children and their parents will present.
The conference aims to show that the conventional belief about autism is a myth: Autism CAN be treated effectively!
The three-day conference will provide up-to-the minute information on the causes of autism and its biomedical treatments. Top experts will present on a variety of topics including: nutritional interventions, the gluten-/casein-free diet, treating gastrointestinal problems, the autism-vaccine connection, metal detoxification, and much more.
The conference will kick-off DAN's Autism is Treatable Campaign, in which national and local media will be invited to meet families throughout the U.S. whose children have recovered or nearly recovered
<http://www.DANConference.com>
- **Autism Resources Booklet**
Parents in Nebraska have compiled a useful booklet of interventions for children with autism, including information they wished they had received when their children were first diagnosed with autism.
The booklet contains information on researching therapies and includes the New York Department of Health Early Intervention Program review on therapies. The booklet can be viewed online at
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/eip/menu.htm>
- **Sleep Disturbances** – tips from parents who have successfully handled their child's sleep issues

Epsom salts baths may be calming before bed.
More info at <http://www.enzymestuff.com/epsomsalts.htm>

Discover food intolerances (eg. salicylates) especially if child falls asleep but then wakes, is prone to night sweating, develops red ears, etc

Try a different bed – foam, MDF or plastic products may aggravate sensitivities

"White noise" may be helpful – a radio tuned slightly off the station to produce static, low volume TV noise, fan, air purifier (not the noiseless models),
- **Adjusting to a group placement environment** (eg. school, kindy)

Juliet Burk (creator of "The Early Learner at Home") has given some great suggestions for helping a child adjust to the structure of a group placement. These include:

Continued from previous page...

Explain the school day through role play, video or picture cards. Prepare the child well beforehand. Obtain pictures of the various activities (eg. a picture for centres, circle time, PE, music, lunch, recess, etc) and use a little wallet picture holder to put them in order. The child could take out the picture of what is coming up next and stick it on the cover of the wallet (Velcro dots work well for this).

The aide should focus on familiarizing the child with the sequence of the day. She could also wear the picture schedule on a necklace around her neck and remind the child about what was coming up soon.

A reward system for good behaviour may be used. (eg. earn tickets and trade them in for small toys).

Make a "quiet" card for the child to hold on to during times when he needs to be quiet. This could be a symbol or appropriate picture.

Consider seating position at group time. Sitting at the front is preferable.

Consider the noise levels and types of sounds in the room.

Ensure the structure is not too random.

Juliet Burk's website is www.autismteachingtools.com

- **How to teach shoelace tying**

A great resource is "Shoe-Tying Made Simple" by Kelly Wilk, OTR

This spiral-bound, self-standing book provides clinicians with a step-by-step, multi-sensory approach to teaching children or adults how to tie their shoes. Bi-coloured shoelaces (included) assist in decreasing confusion, teaching right/left discrimination, and allowing visual markings to be very clear.

The directions are straight forward and accompany a fun poem about shoe-lacing.

The color photos are large and may be used as an optimal prompt for learners with a strong visual style as well as non-readers. Two sets of directions are included: one for right handers and another for left handers. Teaching Laces (bi-coloured) are now available separately.

Check out www.junctionof-ot-function.com/index.html. Look under products.

Another great fun site for tying laces is <http://www.freedomknot.com/flash.html>

More tips at <http://www.atozkidsstuff.com/shoes.html>

If all else fails, an innovative idea for fastening traditional laced running shoes:

Use a round elastic cord to thread through where the laces go on the running shoes and use a toggle-fastener which the elastic is threaded through. Knots can be tied at the ends so the elastic won't feed back out from the toggle fastener. The child tightens his shoes by pulling the elastic cord thru the toggle-fastener. He can wear them as tight or as loose as he likes!

A4 AWARENESS EVENT

Picture the scene, hundreds of white chairs lined up on the grounds of parliament house. A photo attached to each chair, a photo of someone with ASD. Hundreds of people represented by white chairs, the chairs themselves representing the sitting of parliament and the silent pleas of acceptance and understanding.

On **Thursday 30 September**, A4 will be staging an awareness event '**An Audience with Autism**' to coincide with the Biennial Autism Conference in Canberra. We will be walking to Parliament house with invited Parliamentarians and the Autism community. We will walk to where the sea of white chairs will be set up to represent those of us that can't be there on the day. www.a4.org.au

GFCF Cooking Corner

This recipe is gluten free, casein free, and reasonably low in salicylates.

Shepherds Pie

500g minced beef
 few shallots, chopped finely
 sunflower oil
 1 large carrot, diced
 1 stick celery, finely chopped
 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
 1 teaspoon Massel GF stock powder (beef)
 1 ½ cups water
 1 1/2 tablespoons arrowroot or pure cornflour
 ½ cup frozen green peas
 3-4 large potatoes, steamed till just soft
 1 tablespoon rice milk
 2 teaspoons Nuttelex margarine

Heat oil in a large pan. Soften the shallots for 1-2 minutes over low heat. Add the mince and brown, stirring often.

Add carrot, celery and garlic stirring for a few more minutes. Add water and crumbled stock cube to the pan. Bring to the boil, then simmer covered for about 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add the peas and simmer further 5 minutes. Blend the arrowroot or cornflour with a little water in a cup, then add to the meat mixture, stirring until thickened. Remove from heat and place in a casserole dish. Mash the potatoes in a bowl and add the rice milk and margarine. Spread the potato mixture on top of meat mixture in the casserole dish and place in a hot oven for 15-20 minutes or until nicely browned.

Serves 4

Shopping Tip

"Delisoy" Soy Sour Cream and Soy Cream
 These are Organic Soy, Gluten Free, Dairy Free, GM Free.
 Available from Coles in the Health Food Section

New Books

ABI Q has recently purchased the following books for our resource collection

"Special Diets For Special Kids"
 Books 1 and 2
 By Lisa Lewis

"Is Your Child Affected By Chemicals"

These books contain great recipes and information about dietary intervention.

How well does your child cope with medical procedures?

"Your Next Patient Has Autism" is a tri-fold brochure developed for the many health professionals who provide services for children on the autistic spectrum. It is especially designed for those who only occasionally treat this population.

Physical assessment, diagnostic imaging, and a variety of other interventions - both invasive and "non-invasive" - may induce extreme fear and anxiety in autistic children. Their behavioral responses to such experiences often interfere with needed care, and increase the risk of physical and/or psychic trauma.

"Your Next Patient Has Autism" provides caregivers with a brief synopsis of autism together with specific recommendations for managing the special needs of these patients in the context of in-patient or out-patient healthcare. The brochure has been put together by the North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System.

Click on the link below to view this excellent brochure.

<http://www.northshorelij.com/body.cfm?id=2536&oTopID=2536&PLinkID=159>

Source: The Schafer Report : August 18 2004

Homeopathic Medicine Autism Study

A ground-breaking research /treatment study is commencing in Brisbane in the last week of October 2004. The field of study is: "improved understanding and management of children/adults with autism & ASD using homeopathy in combination with A-NADA auricular acupuncture." Your participation is welcomed and encouraged. A public meeting is being organized. For further information please contact the Primary Research Team on ph. 3846 5777 or email: ahm@hommedcentre.com

**Details of the following fabulous fundraising events will appear soon on the
ABIQ website!**

Charity Golf Day Friday 25th February 2005

Masked Ball Saturday 7th May 2005

**Contact Dee Brough on enquiries@abiq.org
if you would like to offer assistance with the staging of either event.**

Autism Birth Cohort Study

[By Liz Fink for the Spectator.]

<http://www.columbiaspectator.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2004/09/23/415264ca43a6>

The past 20 years have seen a surge in the number of children with autism but few corresponding funding increases to study the disorder. But thanks to an October 2003 grant, the Autism Birth Cohort, a joint project of Columbia University and the Norwegian government, is now one of the largest research studies on autism in history. The number of children with autism--a chronic neurological disorder that impairs communication and social interaction--has increased from approximately one in 1,000 to one in 150, and no one can conclusively say why.

"The frequency of this disorder is likely to be increasing ... it's an area that has deserved a great deal more emphasis than it has had for a long time," said Dr. Ian Lipkin, director of the Autism Birth Cohort and a professor at the School of Public Health. The Cohort is a broad-based epidemiological study that uses new technology to identify how genetics, environment, and timing combine to cause autism. A government attempt to free chemical companies from liability for chemicals linked to autism inadvertently attracted major publicity. Preliminary research indicated a relationship between prenatal and infant exposure to thimerosal, present in several vaccines, and autism. In November 2002 an unknown senator embedded deep within a 475-page homeland security bill a provision removing the liability of manufacturers of thimerosal. While the ensuing scandal caused the provision to be scrapped in January 2002, thimerosal's relationship to autism remains unclear. "People just want this issue to go away," said Dr. Mady Hornig, an associate professor of epidemiology whose research corroborates the connection between autism and thimerosal. She also works with the Autism Birth Cohort. Thimerosal is one of the many possible toxic and infectious agents whose effects the Autism Birth Cohort will examine. The Cohort will follow over 75,000 Norwegian expectant mothers and their children, analyzing their medical records, blood samples, and survey questionnaires in order to trace specific agents to the onset of the disease. New technology will allow for intensified study into gene expression of study participants. Hornig said that one of the most revolutionary aspects of the Autism Birth Cohort is its access to funds to buy a certain type of test tube.

"I know that sounds very trivial, but this is basically the turning point that turns this birth cohort into one that is unique in the world," she said, because the test tubes allow for the collection of the genetic material RNA. Early DNA collection is nothing revolutionary because an individual's DNA remains constant throughout their lifetime. According to Hornig, RNA differs because it "tells

you which genes are turned on and off at a particular point in time ... [and provides a] look at gene expression at a particular point in time."

Hornig's research with mice helped demonstrate a link between thimerosal and autism worth pursuing in the Autism Birth Cohort. Research on mice is less complex than on humans for many reasons, including the presence of a specific gene group, H-2S, which can cause autism-like behavior in mice. In humans no specific genes indicating a predisposition to autism have been identified. Finding a conclusive single specific cause of autism is extremely unlikely despite Hornig's initial findings about thimerosal. "We think it is unlikely to be a singular environmental factor" that causes autism, Hornig said. Autism itself is understood to be a spectrum of disorders, increasing the "difficulty in teasing out this complexity." Despite the lack of a definite link, Hornig's findings in mice have caused her to question the use of thimerosal in vaccines. Thimerosal is not actually a necessary component of vaccines: it serves only as an anti-microbial preservative for multi-dose vials. Today it is largely found in flu shots and older vaccinations. "There is no legitimate reason other than cost" to use this additive, Hornig said, adding that at an additional cost of approximately four dollars a vial manufacturers could simply produce single-dose packages and eliminate thimerosal entirely. The issue is hotly political, however, and it is unlikely policy and health officials will reach a consensus on thimerosal in the near future. Rejecting research like Hornig's, the Center for Disease Control Web site states, "No harmful effects have been reported from thimerosal at doses used in vaccines, except for minor reactions like redness or swelling at the reaction site." Despite the clarity of their conclusions, the CDC does say no vaccines used on preschool children against infectious diseases contain thimerosal. This is significant because children generally begin exhibiting signs of autism between the ages of 12 and 15 months. Prenatal exposure to different triggers like thimerosal is a major focus of autism research. In looking to further study the possible effects of thimerosal, the Autism Birth Cohort will focus its research on the prenatal and infancy stages of development. The project, however, will continue for the long term, which Lipkin hopes will allow researches studying other chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, and schizophrenia to be able to use the data as well. "This is the Autism Birth Cohort project, but it's really much, much more. It's the paradigm for any sort of efforts to investigate" the normal trajectory of disease, Lipkin said.

Available for Loan to ABIQ members – No charge

Video Cameras

North side: contact Kylie Graham: 3300 2850

Southside: contact Carmel Grasso: 3219 2080

Print off or tear this page out and put it on your fridge!

Date Claimers			
DATE	TIME	EVENT	CONTACT
3 rd Oct 2004	9am – 5pm	ABA Information Day for uni students (Parents welcome) QUT Kelvin Grove	coordinator@abiq.org 3264 2582
15 th Oct 2004	9am – 3pm	Asperger's Syndrome Successful Inclusion – A Working Example Seminar QUT Carseldine	www.asperger.asn.au
29 th Oct 2004	7:30pm	Northside Support Group 24 Currajon St, Brendale	Bianca 32643995
29 th Oct 2004	7:30pm	Southside Support Group 1 Albin Court, Rochedale South	Maria 33418973
		Westside Support Group Dates and venues to be advised	Fiona Treadwell 54672284
Dec 2004	11am – 3pm	ABIQ Christmas Party PCYC Carindale (Date to be advised)	enquiries@abiq.org
25 th Feb 2005	12:00pm start	ABIQ Charity Golf Day North Lakes resort Golf Club	Dee Brough enquiries@abiq.org
7 th May 2005	7pm	ABIQ Masked Ball Mercure Brisbane	Dee Brough enquiries@abiq.org

DISCLAIMER: This newsletter is intended to provide basic information on Autistic Disorder and Applied Behavioural Analysis. It is not intended to, nor does it, constitute medical or other advice. Readers are warned not to take any action with regard to medical treatment or otherwise based on the information in this newsletter without first consulting a physician. ABIQ does not necessarily endorse any of the information contained in this newsletter. The information contained in this newsletter is intended to be for your general education and information only and not for the use in pursuing any treatment or course of action. Ultimately, the course of action in treating a given patient must be individualised after a discussion with the patient's physician(s) and family.