



2007 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Autism Speaks committed an unprecedented \$30 million in new research funding to uncover the cause(s), prevention, treatments and cure for autism, making it the nation's top private funder of autism research.

Autism Speaks' public service announcement campaign, produced with the Ad Council, garnered over \$81 million in donated media and led to a nationwide 14 percentage point increase in autism awareness by the general public.

Autism Speaks launched the online family services resource guide. This database, which has grown to over 15,000 entries, allows families to search by state or zip code to find a wide range of local or regional services.

Congress approved full funding of the Combating Autism Act. The appropriations bill provides \$162 million for programs at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Autism Speaks launched the Autism Video Glossary, a free, web-based tool to help parents and professionals learn more about the early warning signs of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Autism Speaks' "Autism Treatment Network" (ATN) tripled in size, expanding from five sites to **fifteen** sites across the U.S. and Canada. The ATN is a group of hospitals and medical centers dedicated to improving and standardizing medical care for children and adolescents with ASD.

Autism Speaks completed its merger with Cure Autism Now, a family-founded, autism advocacy group based in Los Angeles. In 2006 Autism Speaks merged with the National Alliance for Autism Research. Autism Speaks is now the nation's largest autism advocacy organization.

Science

Autism Speaks funded researchers reported major scientific findings in the areas of etiology, biology, treatment and diagnosis. Among the key findings were:

- o Individuals with autism were found to have more copy number variations (CNV; small deletions or duplications of DNA) than individuals without autism, and that CNV in autism occur more often as spontaneous rather than inherited mutations.
- o Researchers succeeded in genetically engineering mice with a rare mutation that has been found in some people with autism. These mice offer a new means to directly assess the neurobiology, behavioral deficits and, soon enough, treatment approaches for autism.
- o Research identified a signaling molecule produced by the immune system that, when present even for a brief time in high doses during pregnancy in mice, may cause altered behavior in the offspring when they grow up.

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- o A new study documented a "fever effect" in children with autism, in which temporary fever-induced improvements showed increases in alertness, decreases in self-stimulatory behavior, and for some, more coherent language.

The sixth International Meeting for Autism Research (IMFAR), sponsored by Autism Speaks, was held in Seattle. Over 900 researchers, physicians, and specialists representing 30 countries attended.

Autism Speaks and an international consortium of researchers, philanthropists, government funding agencies, and participating families launched the second phase of the Autism Genome Project (AGP), a global scientific effort to discover the genes responsible for causing autism.

The Interactive Autism Network (IAN) – the first national online autism registry, spearheaded by the Kennedy Krieger Institute and funded by Autism Speaks – was launched. The site, which will accelerate autism research by linking families to researchers nationwide, has registered an unprecedented 20,000 individuals and families. Never before have researchers been offered access to such a large pool of family-provided data.

Autism Speaks co-sponsored "Autism Speaks to the World," the International Congress for Autism Research held in Mexico City. As a result, leading U.S. autism researchers and their Mexican colleagues are collaborating on a strategic plan for autism-related development in Mexico.

The Autism Speaks Clinical Trials Network (CTN) commenced its first industry-sponsored clinical trial, the Study of Fluoxetine in Autism (SOFIA) with UK-based Neuropharm Group Plc. The study will include more than 100 children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

An \$8 million grant from the NIH will enable the Autism Genetic Resource Exchange (AGRE) to expand significantly in 2008.

Awareness

Citing increased awareness of autism by parents, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued new guidelines urging that all children be screened for autism twice before their second birthday. The new AAP Autism Toolkit, which includes Autism Speaks' new online video glossary, provides pediatricians with a wide range of new tools to help them diagnose ASD earlier.

Autism Speaks documentary "Autism Every Day" premiered to a sold-out audience at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. Another film, "Autism: The Musical" benefits Autism Speaks and was purchased by HBO to air in 2008.

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- *The Oprah Winfrey Show* aired "The Faces of Autism" an hour-long episode on the autism epidemic and highlighted portions of the Autism Speaks documentary "Autism Every Day." Several parents from the documentary were guests on the show.
- Over five million Starbucks cups across the U.S. featured a quote about autism awareness and the importance of early intervention from Autism Speaks co-founder Bob Wright.
- Autism Speaks launched new message boards on its website, providing a venue for members of the autism community to quickly and safely share information, resources, and support on a wide range of topics.
- The Autism Speaks video page was launched on YouTube. "Autism Speaks Vids" is designed to increase autism awareness by featuring a variety of clips from both professional and amateur sources.

Family Services

- Autism Speaks awarded the first family services community grants which will focus on building the field of services for individuals with autism and expanding the capacity to effectively serve this growing community.
- Autism Speaks assembled the Autism Response Team (ART), a network of parents who have a child with autism, to streamline response to inquiries regarding autism, early diagnosis and treatment options. Families can reach ART coordinators via e-mail or by phone.
- Autism Speaks launched the Federal Legal Appeal Project, offering free legal aid to certain families in the process of appealing their Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)-based hearings, where the decisions might lead to important national precedents that would benefit many families.
- Following the devastating wildfires in Southern California, Autism Speaks reactivated AutismCares™ which assists families affected by autism when dealing with the aftermath of disasters.

Government Relations

- The Expanding Promise for Individuals with Autism Act (EPIAA) was introduced in Congress and, upon passage, will authorize approximately \$350 million in new federal money for important initiatives related to treatments, interventions, and services for both children and adults with autism.
- Autism Speaks launched a multi-state campaign to secure insurance coverage for autism-related services. Measures were approved in Texas and South Carolina while national model legislation was introduced in Pennsylvania. In 2008, Autism

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Speaks will target California, Florida and Michigan, and continue its efforts in Pennsylvania.

- Autism Speaks helped secure funding for the Department of Defense Autism Spectrum Disorders Research Program (ASDRP). Over the last two years, Autism Speaks has successfully lobbied for \$13.9 million in DOD funds for autism research.
- Autism Speaks began an effort to educate the 2008 Presidential candidates on the importance of autism as a national public health priority, resulting in position statements from multiple candidates.

Fundraising Events

- Autism Speaks Walk Now **for** Autism events, with national sponsor Toys“R”Us, raised over \$27 million in 61 walks throughout the U.S., as well as in the United Kingdom and Canada. Over 275,000 people participated in walks.
- Autism Speaks hosted special fundraising events including concerts, celebrity golf tournaments, star-studded gala dinners, sporting events, motorcycle rides and more, raising over \$8 million.
- Autism Speaks ran in-store promotional fundraising events as a part of April's autism awareness month with Toys“R”Us, TJ Maxx, Modell's and Build-A-Bear Workshop, raising over \$2.2 million.
- Autism Speaks launched its Major Gift program which generated over \$16 million in its first year. More than 200 individuals, foundations, and corporations made donations in excess of \$5,000 each, unrelated to an event.

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