

# CENTER FOR Autism Spectrum Disorders

[www.childrensnational.org/CASD](http://www.childrensnational.org/CASD)



Children's National.

## CASD CHAT E-Newsletter

### Hispanic Heritage Month

¡Saludos! We are currently celebrating Hispanic Heritage month, and we are proud that our clinic is able to welcome so many families with Latin American heritage. This month's CASD CHAT will provide information on an important decision many families ask: "Is it harmful to raise my child in a bilingual home, teaching both Spanish and English?" Families have been told, "Speak only one language to your child on the spectrum" – and usually that means teaching them English only. We know that speaking two languages can be an incredible advantage for children without developmental disabilities, including:

- Bilingual children and adults have been shown to have better executive functioning skills, such as flexible thinking and holding information in mind (working memory).
- Bilinguals tend to have a deeper understanding of how language works and often have better social skills for resolving conflicts and understanding others' perspectives.
- And of course, bilinguals have the ability to speak more than one language and to better understand more than one culture.



Because children with autism often have difficulty with language, the assumption for many years was that learning two or more languages would be harmful and further delay their language skills. In recent years, however, research from the US, Canada, and around the world has shown benefits:

- Children with ASD do not experience greater language delays when exposed to a second language.
- Children with ASD may show better play skills and social interaction skills when they interact with their parents in their home language, rather than in English.
- Here at CASD, Dr. Allison Ratto has found that autistic children learning two languages may have fewer repetitive behaviors and fewer difficulties with getting "stuck" than autistic children learning English only.

- Other labs around the world have also found signs that bilingual autistic children may have better executive functioning than autistic children learning one language only.

The decision of whether or not to raise a child bilingually is a complicated one, particularly when raising a child on the spectrum. The research at our center and around the world is increasingly showing, however, that there are no signs that bilingualism is harmful to children with ASD. And as they grow up, bilingualism can help autistic children to better navigate their world and understand themselves and their cultural heritage. (This CHAT was written by Allison Ratto, PhD with the support of RA Jessica Smith).

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## Profiles Celebrating Neurodiversity

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, we are highlighting the incredible work of political journalist Eric García this month. Eric is an autistic man and third-generation Mexican American who is currently the senior Washington correspondent for *The Independent*. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, who has previously worked at *The Washington Post*, *The Hill*, *Roll Call*, *National Journal* and *MarketWatch*. He also recently published a book entitled *We're Not Broken: Changing the Autism Conversation*. This ground-breaking book presents autism science, disability policy, and the personal stories of many different autistic people to help the public better understand what autism is and how we can create a society that is more inclusive of autistic and other neurodiverse people. Hispanic/Latinx children are under-diagnosed with ASD and also tend to receive ASD diagnoses much later than their peers. Although Latin American countries are quickly expanding research and access to school and clinical treatment for people with ASD, many people in Latin America are still unfamiliar with autism. There are also few representations of Hispanic/Latinx people on the spectrum in media. Eric is working hard to change that narrative, serving as a visible role model for Hispanic/Latinx autistic people and their families.



### 2021 Calendar of Events

#### Free Parent Support Group

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** every Monday at 1 PM EST

Dr. Dan Shapiro, friend of CASD, will be offering a free parent support group, every Monday at 1 PM EST. To register, [click here](#).



# ACT EARLY DC PARENT CAFES

Are you the parent/caregiver of a child  
age 0 - 5?

Join us for a Parent Café on  
Tuesday, October 5, 2021 6pm - 8pm

Register here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctcO-uqTMrH9QRjGXk9KdXnHi8DvLV5-WH>



\$50 gift card  
for your participation!



What are Parent Cafés? Parent Cafés are physically and emotionally safe spaces where parents and caregivers talk about the challenges and victories of raising a family.

Location: Your home, via Zoom  
You will receive the Zoom link  
after registering.



# ACT EARLY DC PARENT CAFES

Are you the father of a child age 0-5?

Join us for a Parent Café on  
Thursday, October 7, 2021 6pm - 8pm

Register here:

<https://forms.gle/NJ5DupVdk9hx6M9W9>



\$50 gift card  
for your participation!



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Location: Your home, via Zoom  
You will receive the Zoom link  
after registering.

The Parents' Place of MD proudly presents the 2021

## Wrightslaw Special Education Law & Advocacy Conference



### WHEN

**October 12-13, 2021**

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

This training will be virtual and held on Zoom.

Cost:

\$160 for Families\*

\$210 for Professionals\*

\*The increased cost includes the set of books mailed to you

[Purchase your family ticket here.](#)

[Purchase your professional ticket here.](#)

Join us for a 2 day virtual conference on special education and advocacy. Topics that will be covered are:

- Special education law, rights, and responsibilities;
- Tests and measurements to measure progress and regression;
- Smart IEPs (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Limited) and;
- Introduction to tactics and strategies for effective advocacy.



[ppmd.org](http://ppmd.org)



## ACT EARLY DC PARENT CAFES

Are you the parent/caregiver of a child age 0-8 diagnosed with Autism or related disability?

Join us for a Parent Café on Saturday, October 23, 2021 10am-12pm Theme: Resiliency in a Time of Change

### Register here:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUqc-mvqj4qHdVDPWVBNaNaGEhLOP-IG\\_oA](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUqc-mvqj4qHdVDPWVBNaNaGEhLOP-IG_oA)



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Location: Your home, via Zoom

You will receive the Zoom link after registering.

## 2021 Mayor's Annual Disability & Diversity Awareness Expo

**Where:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Public Library, 901 G Street, NW, Main Lobby, Washington, DC 20001

**When:** October 27, 2021

The Office of Disability Rights (ODR) in partnership with several District Government agencies will host the event at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library's

Great Hall, in recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The purpose of this free event is to advance the conversation on equal opportunities, provide useful resource information, and promote inclusive environments for persons with disabilities, complete with agency information tables and over 30 exhibitors.

The event will feature:

- Workforce Development
- Employment Readiness
- Housing Resources

Doors open at 10:00 AM. Facemask are 100% required.

To request a reasonable accommodation or for more information, please contact the Office of Disability Rights 202-724-5055 or by email [shelley.carrbrown@dc.gov](mailto:shelley.carrbrown@dc.gov). For more information, click [here](#).

Pathfinders for Autism (<https://pathfindersforautism.org/calendar/>) provides a list of programs for all ages including video group for spouses/partners of adults with Asperger's; Transitioning services and Job skills; Baby and Family Navigator programs, and new this month, Autism from the Autistic Perspective and free Pediatric Occupational Therapy Screening and more!

We recommend checking out [an interview with Dr. Sarah Combs of Children's National Hospital](#) regarding the safety of children returning to school. Additionally, DC Autism Parents has created a Back to School Toolkit. [Click the link here to see the toolkit.](#)

## DC AUTISM PARENTS' BACK TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT



The videos made me feel less alone.  
--Parent

The strategies were very well explained.  
--Parent

**New Free Videos**  
**UNSTUCK**  
AND ON TARGET

The *Unstuck* author team has created short videos to help parents of children with executive functioning difficulties. Please click the playlists below to view the videos in both English and Spanish!

If you like the videos and your child attends school in Virginia, ask your school about being involved in our *Unstuck* implementation project. You can learn more about the project [here](#):



Allysa Ware, Ph.D. Candidate at Catholic University of America is recruiting for her dissertation study, exploring African American parents' views and opinions on parenting a child with autism. The purpose of this survey is to find out your views on different areas of parenting a child with autism, or ASD, and parenting experiences. The survey takes around 15-20 minutes to complete. To qualify to participate in the survey you must be 18 years of age or older, identify as Black or African American, and be the parent or parenting caregiver of an African American child with autism or ASD (age 17 or younger). If you meet these qualifications, and would like to participate, please be assured that your individual responses are completely anonymous and therefore completely confidential. Your participation is also completely voluntary, and there are no penalties for not participating.

As an incentive for completing the survey, you will receive a \$20 Amazon gift card for a completed survey. Please note that if you have further questions about the survey, or its results, you are welcome to contact Ms. Ware directly at her email: 66ware@cua.edu, or her supervising major professor, Dr. Michaela L. Z-Farber, PhD, LCSW-C at farber@cua.edu (office phone 202-319-5465). The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the Catholic University has approved the conduct of this survey. You can also call The Catholic University of America's Office of Sponsored Programs at (202) 319-5218.

If you are interested in participating in the study, please complete the survey by clicking the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/childrensnationalautism>



Hover over  
this QR code  
to complete  
an interest  
form for this  
study.

## PARENT/CAREGIVER INFORMATION SHEET

### *Comparative Effectiveness of EIBI and Adaptive ABA for Children with Autism*

**Principal Investigators:** Susan Hyman, M.D., Cynthia Anderson, Ph.D., BCBA-D,  
Eric Butter, Ph.D., Cynthia Johnson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Zachary Warren, Ph.D.

This information sheet tells you about a research study being conducted at several different sites including the Cleveland Clinic, May Institute, Nationwide Children's Hospital, and Vanderbilt University Medical Center. The study is called *Comparative Effectiveness of EIBI and Adaptive ABA for Children with Autism*, and is for young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families.

#### What is this study about?

We are comparing two different interventions for young children with autism. The interventions are similar in many ways. Both:

- Use strategies that have been shown by research to help young children with autism learn skills (that are evidence based)
- Teach children how to better communicate and socialize
- Teach children important skills like self-help or how to not have problem behavior
- Can be modified to meet the needs of your child and your family

The interventions are different in a few ways, too:

- One intervention will have a therapist working with your child for about 20 hours per week. The other intervention has your child working with a therapist for less hours per week.
- In one intervention the therapist will work with your child on many different goals throughout the study. In the other more focused intervention, the therapist will begin by focusing on teaching your child ways to communicate better, and then may add goals to address other areas such as disruptive behaviors, sleep problems and repetitive behaviors.

#### Next Steps

If you want to learn more about this study, please let me know. You can let me know by filling out the form on the back and giving it back to your provider, who will give it to the research team. Instead if you prefer, you can complete this form online by scanning the QR code on the last page, and someone from the research team will contact you. You can also contact the research team directly at the phone and email listed on the next page. Writing your name on this form or contacting us will not mean that you are participating in the study, it will only mean that you are interested in learning more about the study.

It is important to know that this letter is not to tell you to join this study. It is your decision, and your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to learn any more about the study you can just do nothing, or you can indicate "No" on the back of this form.

For more information or questions about this research, you may call Dr. Ryan Martin at (781) 364-7820, or email at [Rmartin@mayinstitute.org](mailto:Rmartin@mayinstitute.org).

STUDY Number: 00003217  
Version Date: 07.19.2021

Page 1 of 2

RSRB Approval Date: 7/20/2021

## Community Resources & Events

The Drexel Autism Institute is seeking **youth ages 13-29 on the autism spectrum** who are transitioning to adulthood. They are also looking for these youths' **caregivers and providers** to participate in a study about **Team Trestle, an application for transition planning and coordination**. This virtual tool is designed to help autistic individuals meet their life goals by engaging autistic youth/young adults, their parents/legal guardians, and providers in the collaborative process of **implementing and achieving goals during the transition to adulthood**. For more information, check out the flyer. If you're interested, fill out the Interest Form at <https://tinyurl.com/TrestleInterest> [tinyurl.com] or email our team at

### Advocacy Resources

[Autistic Self Advocacy Network-Navigating College: A Handbook on Self Advocacy](#)

### Resources on Racism/Supporting Black People

[Spectrum Support's Social Stories on Racism](#)  
[ASAN's What is Police Violence?: A Plain Language Booklet](#)  
[@TheMorganCruise Worksheets for Black Children](#)

### COVID-19 Safety Resources

[Behavioral Directions LLC's Safety Teaching Protocol](#)

### COVID-19 National and Local Government Resources

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)  
[World Health Organization](#)  
[DC Department of Health](#)  
[Maryland Department of Health](#)

The Autism Institute at Drexel University is seeking parents/caregivers OR preschool/daycare providers of autistic children aged 24-60 months who have trouble speaking and use a communication tool (i.e., PECS, AAC device). We want **to better understand the use of communication tools** and how collaboration occurs about communication tool use in home/school settings **for minimally verbal preschool students with autism**. During a 90-minute focus group or interview we want to learn how teams work together to support children who use communication tools. If you are interested, please fill out the Interest Form at <https://tinyurl.com/EPICfocus> [tinyurl.com] or email [sodi@drexel.edu](mailto:sodi@drexel.edu) and we will contact you.

Virginia Department of Health  
U.S Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C Dispute Resolution Procedures  
U.S Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Dispute Resolution Procedures

Visit Children's National Hospital's COVID-19 Resources



Visit Ivymount 2021 Special Needs Resource Guide: Highlighting 70+ Local OrganizationsFind Information about Behavioral Services, ABA Therapy, Assessment & Treatment; Schools Educational Programs, Advocacy; Social, Recreational, Fitness; Transitioning Youth & Young Adults; Accessibility, Inclusion, Safety, Health; Therapeutic Services; Camps; Financial Planning, Insurance