



TARC NEWSLETTER

Oklahoma's leading information source on issues impacting the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families

April 2007

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Possibilities for Every Ability

These comments were delivered at the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day rally in Oklahoma City on March 22, 2007 by TARC Executive Director John F. Gajda.

For years, people with disabilities, their families and their advocates have struggled to develop a common vision for people with disabilities in Oklahoma. That is one of the reasons we come each year to our state capital and hold rallies like this.

In our day-to-day struggles to assure a good life for people with disabilities, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that our efforts through the years have been fruitful. I went back and looked at some of the bills that, thanks to our advocacy efforts, have been passed by our legislature. Here is what I found.

I found positive remarks regarding the rights of persons with disabilities including statements that people with disabilities:

- have a right to appropriate treatment, services, and habilitation;
- should be treated with dignity and respect; and
- should be provided treatment in the setting that is least restrictive of the person's personal liberty.

I found references to programs that included the expectation that the programs serving people with disabilities:

- improve the quality of life of all persons;
- ensure the most favorable possible outcome for those served;
- provide care that is appropriate to the needs of the persons being served;
- protect the rights of residents; and
- integrate persons into the mainstream of society.

I found a promise to people with disabilities to:

- provide choice;
- acknowledge their contributions as productive and independent citizens;
- encourage their independence, self-esteem, and self-worth, regardless of the severity of their disability; and
- recognize that the most appropriate setting for meeting their needs should be a paramount consideration when determining placement.

I also found a pledge that all new and revised statutes, administrative rules, local laws, ordinances, charters, or regulations developed or any publication published by governmental organizations referring to persons with disabilities should:

- avoid language that implies that a person as a whole is disabled; and
- replace non-respectful language by referring to persons with disabilities as persons first.

please see "Possibilities" on page 2



TARC is committed to ensuring a high quality of life for Oklahomans with developmental disabilities through education, empowerment, support and advocacy. For additional information about TARC or to volunteer, contact us at:

16 East 16th Street, Suite 405, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119-4447

www.ddadvocacy.net tarc@ddadvocacy.net 918-582-8272/800-688-8272 918-582-3628(Fax)

Possibilities, from page 1

All of this sounds great, doesn't it? Remember, this is not our agenda for new legislation. It is just a small sample of what we have already accomplished. These words speak of abilities, not disabilities. The philosophy represented in this language offers possibilities to everyone. And, that's what we are here today to focus on.

Although we probably all have suggestions on what to add, these words, adopted over the years by the Oklahoma legislature, are certainly a sound common philosophical foundation and a good base for our shared beliefs regarding people with disabilities in our state.

Day-to-day, when the rubber hits the road, we all know that we still have a way to go because we all know instances when even this basic language – these commitments – are not followed in daily practices. But we must recognize that we are better off having this common base of beliefs from which to build.

That is our challenge today - to build on this base and make these basic shared beliefs a more common element of the day-to-day lives of all people with disabilities.

How do we do that? That is part of the reason why we are holding this rally today at our state capitol and the seat of Oklahoma government. Now that we have decided what our shared beliefs about people with disabilities are, we turn to government to carry them out.

But there is a great debate that is echoing through these halls and throughout Oklahoma about the role government should play in our lives. This is an important debate for people with disabilities because of the negative way some people are trying to portray government. Those of us who advocate for people with disabilities must be part of these discussions and must not lose sight of the critical role government must play in implementing our vision.

The promotion of these collective beliefs is one of the things that government does better than we can do individually. One of the ways government does this is by providing public services. For example, think of our beliefs about transportation. We believe that we should have good roads on which to travel across our vast state. As I drove here today I rode over a pot hole. Now, I don't want to have to carry some cold patch around with me in my trunk and have to stop to fill in pot holes. We have delegated this role to our government. The same is true regarding services for people with disabilities. Government has a role in implementing the values we have developed and can do it more efficiently than we can individually. Just as I don't want to have to patch pot

holes in the roads, I don't want to have to send my share, probably 10 or 20 cents, to each of the hundreds of providers of service to people with disabilities in Oklahoma and don't want to be individually responsible for monitoring the use of the money, nor would I want to be responsible for personally providing four hours of direct care per year.

It is important for people with disabilities and their advocates, particularly today when we meet with our legislators, to not think of government as "them" but to remember that government is about "us."

Some advocates for people with disabilities are put off by government, however. I recently spoke with a member of the legislature and he told me about a visit he had with a voter from his district to discuss allocating more funds for public programs that serve people with disabilities. He said that at the conclusion of the meeting, as his constituent was leaving, he was told "Oh yeah... be sure to vote for any bill that lowers my taxes." The legislator said he was flabbergasted. "Where does this individual think the money for increased public services comes from?" he asked.

One count I heard was that there were over 350 bills filed this session that lower taxes, fees or other revenue. As advocates, we need to be willing to support government in performing the individual and collective responsibilities we assign it. We can not afford to be detached spectators in the process, but must be major actors in public life because there are people speaking out who are trying to starve government and force each of us to drive around filling pot holes. Those who think there can be something for nothing in the short run should refocus on long-term sustainable solutions that support our beliefs about people with disabilities.

We need to reinforce the notion of shared fate between people with disabilities and all citizens of Oklahoma and the commitment to a common good and quality of life which gave rise to government in the first place.

So as you visit your legislators today and as you communicate with them in the months to come about specific programs and services, remind them that you believe that government has a unique role in supporting important societal goals for people with disabilities and we need their commitment to ensure that in Oklahoma, there are continued possibilities for individuals of every ability.



Visit us on the web at:
www.ddadvocacy.net



The TARC Tracking List

Legislative Update

Bills continue to move through the legislative process as the end of the second month of the session nears.

The list of bills on the monitoring list below has decreased as some bills have failed to advance. The status is up-to-date as of March 31st. All bills still alive should now have been passed in the chamber in which they were filed and are being considered in the opposite house.

The next critical deadline is April 5th for approval by the committee in the opposite house.

Although it appeared that a critical budget compromise had been reached in March, since the Governor returned to town and exercised his veto it's back to the drawing board and the possibility of increased tension among legislative factions. Coming up with an acceptable budget plan could become the major barrier that must be addressed this session. Although in the short run a compromise may be reached over the budget for next fiscal year, the impact of any agreement on the long term fiscal health of the state should be of concern to those of us who advocate for people with disabilities.

HB 1084-Office of Handicapped Concerns-“Office of Handicapped Concerns” becomes “Office of Disability Concerns.”

Principal Authors: Paul Wesselhoft (H) & Kathleen Wilcoxson (S)

Status: General Order-Senate

Status Date: 3-29-07

HB 1494-Sales Tax Exemption for Hearing Aids- Authorizes a sales tax exemption on the sale of hearing aids.

Principal Authors: Daniel Sullivan (H) & Tom Adelson (S)

Status: Second Reading-Referred to Senate Committee

Status Date: 3-15-07

HB 1668-Fishing and Hunting Licenses-

Authorizes a tax credit for the fee charged for fishing and hunting licenses for certain individuals.

Principal Authors: Joe Dorman (H) & Jeff Rabon (S)

Status: Second Reading-Referred to Senate Committee

Status Date: 3-15-07

HB 1695-Agricultural Workers with Disabilities-

Establishes services for farmers with disabilities, creating the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project Act.

Principal Authors: John Enns (H) & Patrick Anderson (S)

Status: Advanced to Full Committee

Status Date: 3-28-07

HB 1926-Reimbursement Review for DHS

Providers-Establishes an Advantage Waiver and Developmental Disability Services Rate Review Committee to review reimbursement rates for DHS providers.

Principal Authors: Jeannie McDaniel (H) & Nancy Riley (S)

Status: Advanced to Full Committee

Status Date: 3-28-07

HB 1933-Olmstead Strategic Planning Committee-

Addresses the operation of the Olmstead Strategic Planning committee, extending it until July 1, 2010. Also extends duties of committee to include assistance in implementing a strategic plan.

Principal Authors: Kris Steele (H) & Constance Johnson (S)

Status: Second Reading-Referred to Senate Committee

Status Date: 3-26-07

SB0164-Protective Services for Vulnerable Adults-

Makes it a felony to distribute or manufacture controlled substances in the presence of a vulnerable adult.

Principal Authors: Jonathan Nichols (S) & Lucky Lamons (H)

Status: Second Reading-Referred to House Committee

Status Date: 3-15-07

SB 0398-Protective Services for Vulnerable Adults-

Adds definition of “financial neglect” to the Protective Services for Vulnerable Adults Act and expands the list of individuals required to make reports if neglect is suspected.

Principal Authors: Tom Adleson (S) & Daniel Sullivan (H)

Status: General Order-House

Status Date: 3-28-07

SB 0619-Children in Juvenile Court-Establishes

procedures for evaluating children who are charged in Juvenile Court as a delinquent to determine if they are competent to stand trial.

Principal Authors: Tom Adelson (S) & Dennis Adkins (H)

Status: Second Reading-Referred to House Committee

Status Date: 3-15-07

7 Reasons You Should Be Concerned About the State's Budget Outlook



Oklahoma's policymakers responded to a short-term revenue surge in 2005 and 2006 by enacting deep and permanent cuts to the state income tax, leaving the state's budget in a precarious situation. These cuts began to take effect in 2006 and 2007 and are scheduled to mushroom over the next few years. New budget projections showing minimal or no revenue growth on the horizon calls into question the state's capacity to meet current and future spending commitments.

The funding of basic public services in Oklahoma depends on the continued annual growth of tax revenues. Recent projections suggest that tax cuts passed during the previous two legislative sessions may be leaving Oklahoma without adequate revenues to meet its spending obligations:

1. Personal income tax collections are dropping;

Usually the state's fastest-growing revenue source, personal income tax collections are projected to be 9.2% lower in FY'08 than in FY'06.

2. Total revenue collections are sluggish;

If projections are correct, General Revenue collections will grow just 1.5% in FY '07 and 1.0% in FY '08.

3. Next year's revenue growth is all dependent on the corporate income tax;

Without nearly \$190 million in projected growth in corporate income tax collections, the Legislature would be looking at no revenue growth at all for the coming budget year. The corporate tax projections are historically unprecedented and especially uncertain.

4. Revenues are faltering even as the economy is performing well;

Over the past quarter-century, year-to-year revenue growth has fallen below 2% only during times of

recession. Yet revenues are forecast to stagnate even as Oklahoma continues to enjoy a healthy economy over the coming months. Should the economy enter a downturn, the budget outlook will become even more precarious.

5. Major new tax cuts are still scheduled to take effect;

The tax cuts passed 2006 are scheduled to continue to grow by well more than \$200 million through fiscal years '09, '10 and '11, dampening available growth revenue for at least several years to come.

6. The state has left large bills to be paid in FY '08;

Between the normal rising costs of services (e.g. Medicaid, corrections) and commitments made by previous Legislatures that must be fully funded (e.g. pay raises, benefit costs), the available growth revenue for FY '08 is mostly accounted for without any additional investments in areas of priority.

7. Significant long-term spending pressures are mounting;

Even without the tax cuts of recent sessions, Oklahoma would be facing mounting fiscal challenges and a structural budget deficit due to such factors as an aging population, declining federal support and an archaic tax structure.

Source: Alliance for Oklahoma's Future

Civitan Pancake Breakfast to Benefit TARC



Enjoy delicious pancakes and help TARC continue helping individuals with developmental disabilities and their families!

What: 15th Annual Metro Tulsa Civitan Pancake Breakfast

When: Saturday, April 21

Where: Southwood Baptist Church, 4020 S. 102nd E. Ave

Cost: \$4 for All-You-Can-Eat, Children under 3-free

Call Amanda Turner at TARC, 918-582-8272, to purchase tickets

Restoration of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA): Making the Law Work the Way Congress Intended

“Now I sign legislation which takes a sledgehammer to another wall, one which has for too many generations separated Americans with disabilities from the freedom they could glimpse, but not grasp.... I now lift my pen to sign this Americans with Disabilities Act and say ‘Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down.’”

President George H.W. Bush (1990)

When it was passed by the Congress and signed by President George H.W. Bush in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) had the stated intention of providing a “clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities.” Americans with disabilities looked toward the day when the act would be fully implemented and the barriers that had always prevented access to full participation, inclusion, and equality of opportunity in American society would be gone.

In its more than sixteen years of existence, the ADA has brought a host of changes in access to community activities, services, transportation, communication, the workplace and other aspects of American life. And as people have sought the help of the courts to have their rights under the ADA upheld, there have been many lower court rulings and a few Supreme Court decisions that have clearly served to liberate people with disabilities (e.g. Supreme Court decisions in *Tennessee v. Lane*, *Martin v. PGA Tours*, and *Olmstead v. L.C.*)

Unfortunately, however, the ADA currently needs work. That is because a host of lower court rulings and some significant Supreme Court rulings have sent up a warning flag that the courts have allowed a retreat from the core principles of the ADA, and that the “shameful wall {s} of exclusion” have *not* “come tumbling down” for people with disabilities who want to work. Indeed, new walls have been built and old walls restored.

How do we know this?

-The employment rate of people with disabilities has not improved.

-Courts decide against people who challenge disability discrimination 97% of the time, often before the person has even had a chance to show that the employer treated them unfairly.

-Two-thirds of people with disabilities who do not have a job indicate they would work if they could find employment.

The courts have created an absurd Catch-22. The employer can say a person is “too disabled” to do the job but not “disabled enough” to be protected by the law. The case is thrown out of court, and the individual is never even given the chance to prove s/he can do the job.

People with conditions like epilepsy, diabetes, HIV, cancer, hearing loss, or mental illness, for example, who manage their disabilities with medication, prosthetics, hearing aids, etc. – or “mitigating measures” – are viewed as “too functional” to have a disability and are denied the ADA’s protection from employment discrimination.

Likewise, people who have been denied a job or fired because an employer mistakenly believed that they could not perform the job or the employer just did not want “people like that” in the workplace are also denied the ADA’s protection from employment discrimination, because the Supreme Court has disregarded explicit statements by Congress that it intended to protect individuals who were denied opportunities based on the beliefs, prejudices, or fears of others.

What, exactly, has the Supreme Court done wrong?

It all started on June 22, 1999, when the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Sutton v. United Airlines* that severely myopic twins who had unsuccessfully sought jobs as pilots with United Airlines felt they had been discriminated against when they were not hired because of their weak eyesight, even though their vision was correctable by “mitigating measures,” eyeglasses. Thus the Supreme Court began its process of severely narrowing the definition of disability, in this case by upholding discrimination against individuals who were “regarded as” having a disability by the employer.

Likewise, in *Murphy v. United Parcel Service* that same year, the high court ruled against a UPS mechanic who was fired because his blood pressure exceeded health guidelines. The man had challenged his firing

please see “Restoration of ADA” on page 6

“Restoration of ADA,” from pg. 5

on grounds his high blood pressure was a disability, but the Supreme Court disagreed because the man could function normally with the help of blood pressure medication, another “mitigating measure.”

Then, in *Albertsons Inc. v. Kirkingburg*, also in 1999, a driver for Albertsons was mistakenly certified as meeting visual standards for truck drivers. When the error was discovered, Albertsons fired him and refused to rehire him even after he obtained a waiver from the standards. The court ruled the driver had not shown that the alleged disability affected a “major life activity.”

Along the same lines, in *Toyota Motor Mfg. v. Williams* in 2002, the Supreme Court said a Toyota assembly line worker with carpal tunnel syndrome who was fired because of her poor attendance record was not entitled to protection under the ADA because it was not clear that she had substantial impairment of a “major life activity.”

As one of the original Co-Sponsors of the ADA in 1990, Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said in 2002 that it was not the intent of Congress “that lawyers for businesses and individuals should spend time and money arguing about whether people can brush their teeth and take out the garbage” before being able to show unfair discrimination in employment.

In 2004, the National Council on Disability produced their report, “Righting the ADA” and opened with the words, “*Like a boat blown off course or tipped on its side, the ADA just needs to be righted.*”

What can be done to fix this situation?

Last year, in an effort to restore the ADA’s original intent, Congressmen Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and John Conyers (D-MI) introduced the Americans with Disabilities Act Restoration Act (H.R. 6258) which would have amended the ADA of 1990 to bar discrimination against anyone “on the basis of disability,” a change from the current wording, which bars discrimination “against an individual with a disability,” the very wording that has been so narrowly construed by the courts and has often resulted in judges throughout the court systems trying to decide whether someone actually has a disability that qualifies them for protection.

Under the definition of disability in the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who “1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; 2) has a record of such an impairment; or 3) *is regarded as* having such an impairment.” The language in the 2006 ADA Restoration bill was consistent with the intent of the original language that says that even if a plaintiff’s condition is not substantially disabling because of corrective, or “mitigating” measures, the individual is still protected by the ADA because he or she had a *record* of a disability or is *regarded or perceived* by the employer as being impaired.

A similar approach is currently under consideration in the 110th Congress, both in the House and the Senate, to pass legislation that would restore the right of an individual to be judged based solely on her or his employment qualifications.

What are the chances for success?

As Congressional supporters and advocates attempt to return the ADA to the track that Congress meant for it to follow in 1990, the best strategy for passing the new legislation is still evolving. With no current bill either in the House or Senate, our Congressional champions, Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), as well as the disability community, are nonetheless busy making contact with key Members in the House and Senate, hoping to assemble the same kind of broad bipartisan and bicameral coalition that passed the original ADA.

Another key ingredient in the recipe for success of the ADA Restoration Act is the President himself. As the son of the President who so strongly supported and signed the original act into law, and as the author of his own New Freedom Initiative for people with disabilities, George W. Bush, some might say, would have every reason in the world to reaffirm his father’s belief in the rights of people with disabilities. The President, however, has been notably silent on the issue during his first six years in office, although he has had ample opportunity not only to enforce more aggressively the provisions of the ADA through his Administration, but also, to enhance its effectiveness through the programs in his New Freedom Initiative.

Source: Washington Watch, Volume 5, Issue 1, published by the Disability Policy Collaboration



IDEA Supreme Court Update

National Council on Disability (NCD) chairperson John R. Vaughn has released a statement regarding the U.S. Supreme Court oral argument on whether parents may, without a lawyer (*pro se*), file a lawsuit to enforce their child's rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The case of *Winkelman v. Parma City School District* (No. 05-983), addresses a split among circuit courts, one circuit deciding that there are no limitations on the parents' ability to prosecute *pro se* an IDEA case in federal court, several circuits ruling that under IDEA parents can only represent *pro se* their own interests and not those of their child, and the Sixth Circuit saying in *Winkelman* that parents cannot represent themselves or their kids in court under IDEA.

As an independent federal agency that is statutorily charged with the responsibility of promoting disability laws and programs, NCD is concerned about maintaining the ability of parents to obtain the rights and benefits guaranteed to their children under IDEA.

Chairperson Vaughn concluded by urging that the resolution of the *Winkelman* case give full effect to the educational guarantees of IDEA by supporting the rights of parents to pursue the interests of their children regardless of whether they have a lawyer to assist them.

The entire statement with links to related NCD publications is available at <http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/news/2007/r07-531.htm>.

Source: NCD

Eligibility for Benefits Update: Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool

The Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool (BEST) is a tool individuals can use to find out if they might be eligible for benefits from any of the programs Social Security administers. The tool screens for eligibility for Medicare, Social Security Disability, Social Security Retirement, Social Security Survivors, Special Veterans and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. This information has recently been updated, and is now available at: <http://www.disabilityinfo.gov/digov-public/public/DisplayPage.do?parentFolderId=169>.

Source: www.disabilityinfo.gov



Presented by



Tulsa's Favorite Starlight Scramble is Back!

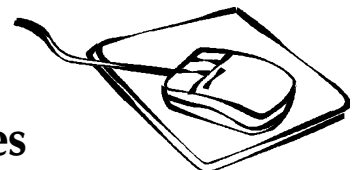
Friday, May 4, 2007
LaFortune Championship Golf Course

9 HOLE ♦ SHOTGUN START AT 9 P.M. ♦

4 PERSON SCRAMBLE ♦ PAR 3

To inquire about playing in or sponsoring this one-of-a-kind event, contact Amanda Turner at 918-582-8272 or 1-800-688-8272.

Autism Website for Spanish-Speaking Families



A website is now available for Spanish-speaking families and individuals to learn more about autism, news related to autism and chat with other Spanish-speaking individuals affected by the disorder. Visit the site at: www.manitasporautismo.com.

Exciting Workshops for Parents



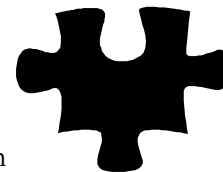
The Oklahoma Parent Training and Information Center, in partnership with TARC and the Oklahoma Parent Center will present parent trainings across the state throughout 2007. Workshops will address issues that are critical to parents with children in the special education system, including:

- IDEA 2004 Updates
- Communication
- Transition
- Part C/Early Intervention
- Developing IEPs

Workshops are offered in various cities across the state. For training locations or more information, visit www.oklahomarent.org or call 1-877-553-4332.

April Parent Trainings			
Date	City	Time	Topic
April 5	Tulsa	6:30-8:30 p.m.	IDEA 2004 Updates
April 10	Poteau	6:00-8:00 p.m.	IDEA 2004 Updates
April 12	Norman	6:30-8:30 p.m.	IDEA 2004 Updates and Communication
April 19	Bennington	6:30-8:00 p.m.	IDEA 2004 Updates

April is Autism Awareness Month



April is National Autism Awareness Month, an awareness initiative established in 1972 which includes hundreds of community-based events around the country. Several organizations are working to promote better public understanding of autism, including the following:

- The **Autism Society of America (ASA)** has arranged for a cover story on autism to appear in April's edition of *Discover* magazine. ASA also provided background research for autism for articles appearing in *Reader's Digest*, *People* and *Working Mother*. Visit www.autism-society.org for more information.
- **Autism Speaks**, an autism awareness organization, will launch a new public service advertising (PSA) campaign on April 6. The PSAs stress that autism is more common than most people realize and can be seen in print, broadcast, cable, and internet media. Visit www.autismspeaks.org for more information.
- The **Tulsa Autism Foundation** will participate in Autism Awareness Day at the State Capitol on April 26. Families are welcome to attend. Visit www.autismtulsa.org or email Michelle Wilkerson at michelle@autismtulsa.org for more information.

Join TARC at these April Events!

Governor's Conference on Developmental Disabilities

April 9-10
*Renaissance Tulsa Hotel
 and Convention Center*

Join TARC at the Governor's Conference! Exhibitors, informative speakers and outstanding workshops make this a can't-miss event!

For more information or to register, call 1-800-836-4470 or visit <http://www.okdhs.org/library/cal/ddsd/>.

People with Disabilities Awareness Day 2007

April 11
Oklahoma State Capitol

Come to the state capitol for the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services' People with Disabilities Awareness Day. Activities include legislative advocacy training, visits with legislators and the opportunity to visit exhibitors.

Registration is free; pre-register online at www.okrehab.org or by calling (405) 951-3478 or (800) 845-8476.

Tiny, Spontaneous Gene Mutations May Boost Autism Risk

Tiny gene mutations, each individually rare, pose more risk for autism than had been previously thought, suggests a study funded in part by the National Institute of Mental Health, a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

These spontaneous deletions and duplications of genetic material were found to be ten times more prevalent in sporadic cases of autism spectrum disorders than in healthy control subjects — but only twice as prevalent in autism cases from families with more than one affected member. The results implicate the anomalies as primary, rather than just contributory, causes of the disorder in most cases when they are present, according to the researchers. Although they might share similar symptoms, different cases of autism could thus be traceable to any of 100 or more genes, alone or in combination.

Drs. Jonathan Sebat, Michael Wigler, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (CSHL), and 30 colleagues from several institutions, report on their discovery online, March 16, 2007 in "Science Express."

"These structural variations are emerging as a different kind of genetic risk for autism than the more common sequence changes in letters of the genetic code that we've been looking for," explained NIMH director Thomas Insel, M.D. "The best evidence yet that such deletions and duplications are linked to the disorder, these findings certainly complicate the search for genes contributing to autism. These are rare changes, dispersed across the genome, and they tell us that autism may be the final common path for many different genetic abnormalities."

"Our results show conclusively that these tiny glitches are frequent in autism, occurring in at least ten percent of cases, and primarily in the sporadic form of the disease, which accounts for 90 percent of affected individuals," added Sebat. "Understanding such sporadic autism will require

different genetic approaches and stepped-up recruitment of families in which only one individual has the disease."

Sebat and colleagues used new high resolution array technology to detect mutations that were present in a child but not in either parent. They screened genetic material from 264 families drawn, in part, from the Autism Genetic Resource Exchange (AGRE) and the NIMH Center for Collaborative Genetic Studies of Mental Disorders.

They found the spontaneous mutations in 14 of 195 people with autism spectrum disorders compared to two of 196 unaffected individuals. Among the 14 autism patients with mutations, 12 were the only affected members of their family, while two were in families with other affected individuals.

Since the rate of mutations was much lower in families with more than one affected member, the researchers propose that "two different genetic mechanisms contribute to risk: spontaneous mutation

and inheritance, with the latter being more frequent in families that have multiple affected children."

The two mutations detected in 196 healthy controls were duplications, while 12 of those in people with autism were deletions of genetic material. Relatively more females had the mutations, suggesting that the anomalies may contribute to disease more equally across the sexes than other causes of autism. Boys with autism outnumber girls 4 to 1.

Since each mutation is individually rare - few were seen more than once - the results suggest that many different sites in the genome likely contribute to autism.

"Failure to develop social skills and repetitive and obsessive behavior may in fact be the consequence of a reaction to many different cognitive impairments," note the researchers.

Source: NIH

"The results implicate the anomalies as primary, rather than just contributory, causes of the disorder in most cases when they are present, according to the researchers. "



TULSA ADVOCATES FOR THE RIGHTS OF CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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TULSA, OKLAHOMA 74119-4447

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The TARC newsletter is published monthly by the Tulsa Advocates for the Rights of Citizens With Developmental Disabilities, Inc., to inform readers about issues and legislative action that affect adults, children, their families, and the dedicated people who work with this challenging population. The contents do not necessarily represent the official position of TARC.

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HELP TARC HELP FAMILIES – BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Asperger's Syndrome S.O.S

A project of Tulsa Public Schools in conjunction with TARC

Next Meeting:
Thursday, April 5
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Kendall Whittier Elementary

S.O.S. is a social group for kids with Asperger's Syndrome and a support group for their parents, both of which are open to all families — not just those in Tulsa Public Schools.

To sign up, call Stephanie Orban at 746-8747. For more information, contact Sherilyn Walton at TARC, 918-582-8272.


Connections Asperger's Group

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, April 25 - 4:30 p.m.
Hardesty Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.

The "Connections" Asperger's Group is a social skills group for adolescents and young adults with Asperger's Syndrome. The group meets monthly. Contact Sherilyn or Amie at 918-582-8272 for more information.

Day Makers

Activities group for adults with developmental disabilities
Thursdays • 1:00-2:30 p.m.
McClure Recreation Center
7740 E. 7th Street in Tulsa
Contact: Amie, 918-582-8272

 **Hispanic Parents Support Group**
El Grupo Hispano de Apoyo a Padres de Familia

Next Meeting: Monday, April 30 *For more information, call Zaida at 918-582-8272*
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett


MOMS & DADS SUPPORT GROUP

Next Meeting:
Thursday, April 26
7:00-9:00 p.m.

Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church,
4102 E. 61st St., Room B-8
• No child care provided

The mission of the Moms & Dads Support Group is to nurture and support families whose children have a developmental disability, to encourage positive strategies in dealing with challenges, and to share in the joy of raising our children.

Contact: Sherilyn, 918-582-8272



TULSA PEOPLE FIRST

Next Meeting:
Tuesday, April 10

MOMS & DADS SUPPORT GROUP – OWASSO

For more information, contact Sherilyn, 918-582-8272.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 17
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
First Baptist Church of Owasso,
13307 E. 96th Street North, Room 700

SAPULPA-NEW! Support Group for Families of Children with Special Needs

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 17, 6:15 p.m.
Creek County Literacy Center, 15 N. Poplar
Childcare is not provided, but please take advantage of Sapulpa's great Respite Care Program!

For more information, contact Mindy Littlefield, 378-5632

*Dinner-5:30 p.m.
Meeting-6:30 p.m.*

For more information, call Amie at 918-582-8272