50 Years of Research.
50 Years of Success.
Every year, about 1 person in 68 will be diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Many families will not have access to adequate information about support and effective treatment options.
Our Mission

The mission of the Autism Research Institute is to improve the health and well-being of people on the autism spectrum through research and the education of professionals, those who are affected, and their families.

AUTISM RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Autism is Treatable
Soon after their son Mark was born, research psychologist Dr. Bernard Rimland and his wife Gloria realized that he was not responding and acting like other infants. After consulting with several pediatricians, they were at their wits’ end — just like many other parents then and now. Fortunately, Mrs. Rimland remembered reading a psychology textbook that described a child who acted differently from others. They searched through a pile of boxes, found the book, and realized immediately that their son had autism. This was the first time that Dr. Rimland saw the word “autism,” even though he had completed advanced degrees in psychology just a few years earlier.

In 1964, Dr. Rimland single-handedly shattered the then-accepted psychogenic view of autism in his seminal book titled *Infantile Autism: The Syndrome and Its Implication for a Neural Theory of Behavior*. Two decades after the concept of autism was first introduced by Dr. Leo Kanner, Dr. Rimland’s thesis turned the field topsy-turvy and provided much-needed guidance on how best to understand and treat individuals on the autism spectrum. Then, in 1967, Dr. Rimland helped to create the Autism Research Institute to conduct and sponsor research aimed at finding the causes and developing treatments for autism.

Much has happened during the fifty years since the Autism Research Institute was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization. Many challenges have been faced and successes celebrated, and now in our sights is a future both challenging and promising.

ARI’s founder, Dr. Bernard Rimland, was a true pioneer and advocate who provided the autism field with a visionary pathway — which we continue to follow today.
The Autism Research Institute’s Golden Anniversary provides a unique opportunity to reflect on our organization’s impact on groundbreaking research, education, and treatment while we prepare to advance ARI’s mission for the next fifty years.

ARI’s founder and autism pioneer Dr. Bernard Rimland spent forty-two years of his life building a progressive organization dedicated to the unbiased advancement of autism research. My nearly forty-year association with ARI has allowed me the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Rimland and to contribute to the organization’s multifaceted impact on issues related to autism spectrum disorder.

Dr. Rimland was the first person to argue that there is a neurological basis to autism, likely a result of an interaction between genes and the environment — which is the prevailing view today. ARI was also the first organization to convincingly state that autism is treatable.

ARI has long taken the approach that we must do whatever it takes to help those on the spectrum. This has earned ARI trust and a reputation for integrity and transparency. We feel that it is critical we remain independent of outside influence and, therefore, we do not accept grants from government agencies or donations from special interest groups. In addition, we do not accept contributions from or promote companies offering autism-related products and services.

ARI’s Board of Directors, dedicated staff, and I want to thank our donors as well as the autism community for decades of support and encouragement. We hope you’ll take the time to look through this booklet to learn more about the many ways we at ARI work to support the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) community.

Our true goal is to improve the lives of people on the autism spectrum and their families. Please join us in making a difference for decades to come. Our ambitious, science-based agenda for the future underscores our dedication to the families and professionals who are counting on us.

Sincerely,

Stephen M. Edelson, PhD
Executive Director
Autism Research Institute
The Rimlands’ son Mark is born. As an infant, he displays unusual behaviors. Several pediatricians are unable to help. After reading an old college textbook describing autism, Dr. Rimland realizes that parents, especially the mother, is blamed for causing autism in the child.

Dr. Rimland publishes *Infantile Autism: The Syndrome and Its Implications for a Neural Theory of Behavior*, in which he argues convincingly that autism is biologically based and not a result of emotional trauma due to poor parenting.

1964

Dr. Rimland establishes the Autism Society of America to network parents of children on the spectrum and to promote the use of behavioral techniques, known today as Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA). Dr. Rimland was a strong supporter of Dr. Ivar Lovaas, who pioneered ABA.

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What We Do

One-of-a-Kind Research Institution

Advancing an ambitious research agenda while providing the latest science-based information for people of all ages on the spectrum is our focus at the ARI. We do so through our annual think tank, in-person and online educational events and courses, free webinars, and by funding the studies that hold the most promise for making a difference in the lives of people with autism.

While the causes of ASD remain unclear, recent scientific advances challenge the traditional view of autism as an untreatable disease — as one that is genetically hardwired. These developments support the position that ARI has always maintained: autism is treatable. ARI continues to pioneer in research, outreach, and cooperative efforts with other organizations worldwide.

ARI brings together diverse scientists, clinicians and stakeholders to better understand the complexities of autism. Only by integrating different points of view will we understand this disorder.”

— RICHARD E. FRYE, MD, PhD
Director of Autism Research
Arkansas Children’s Hospital Research Institute
Think Tanks – Not the Status Quo

Since 1995, the Autism Research Institute has convened experts at its annual scientific think tanks to pose novel questions and discuss issues related to promising treatments and intervention. ARI also funds and sponsors consensus meetings to facilitate ongoing discussion about the latest findings and approaches to address medical symptoms associated with autism spectrum disorders.

We are committed to asking the tough questions. For fifty years our work has influenced how researchers approach investigating the cause of and effective treatments for autism spectrum disorders.

*Our purpose is clear: Advance research by following the science wherever it leads.*

The most innovative, thought-inspiring meeting I attend all year. Full of new, resilience-building ideas and research, and creative, out-of-the-box thinkers, it is my most valued meeting.”

— ROBERT L HENDREN, DO
Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science
University of California San Francisco School of Medicine

The ARI think tank is a place where we can discuss autism from cell to clinic in a collegial environment. As bench scientists, we are informed by the clinicians, and hope to provide a foundation for future clinical practice based upon our basic research.”

— JUDY VAN DE WATER, PhD
Professor of Medicine
Director, Center for Children’s Environmental Health
Associate Director Biological Sciences - UC Davis MIND Institute

I participated in several think tank meetings to discuss current studies and new trends in autism research. All of them were highly informative, productive, and fostered collaboration between its participants.”

— RAFAIL KUSHAK, PhD, DrSc
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
Harvard Medical School
Massachusetts General Hospital

1967 The Institute for Child Behavior Research (renamed in the mid 1980s to ARI) is established as a 501(c)3 non-profit with the aim to conduct, encourage, and fund research as well as network scientists with one another and with parents.

1968 Dr. Rimland produces the documentary *The Invisible Wall*. In the film, Dr. Rimland discusses his thoughts on autism and suggests a genetic-environmental connection. To view the film, see http://bit.ly/theinvisiblewall.

1969 Dr. Leo Kanner, the psychiatrist who first described infantile autism in 1943, speaks at the first National Society for Autistic Children Conference and states that parenting does not cause autism. Having once blamed parents, he changed his thinking primarily after reading *Infantile Autism*. 
Dr. Rimland moves his home office to a store front and begins to write about the importance of nutrition and restricted diets (e.g., caveman diet). Parents around the world volunteer to translate Dr. Rimland's diagnostic checklist.

Dr. Rimland co-authors one of the first biochemical studies on autism with Dr. Mary Coleman and finds a correlation between serotonin levels in blood platelets and his diagnostic checklist. “The Rimland School” for children with autism opens in Evanston, IL.

ARI publishes a large-scale study on autism involving 190 children using a placebo-controlled research design to evaluate the efficacy of several vitamins. Dr. Rimland concludes that vitamin B6 may be beneficial to people on the autism spectrum.
Dr. Rimland co-edits the book *Modern Therapies*.

Sylvester Stallone establishes the Stallone Fund for autism research, to which he donates the proceeds from several *Rocky* movie premieres. As treasurer, Dr. Rimland awards grants primarily for brain autopsies.

Dr. Rimland publishes an article titled “The Autistic Savant” in *Psychology Today*. He argues that the original term used to describe someone with an unlearned skill, “idiot savant,” should be replaced with the term “autistic savant.”

Dr. Rimland and Dr. Lovaas are featured in a story in *Rolling Stone* magazine. The publicity brings much attention to their work.

Dr. Lovaas introduces Stephen M. Edelson, PhD to Dr. Rimland, and Dr. Edelson offers to volunteer with ARI.
Dr. Rimland retires from the Navy and devotes all of his time to autism. Dr. Edelson finishes his graduate training on the same day. Soon after, they start a twenty-year collaboration.

Dr. Edelson begins teaching at the Claremont Colleges. He organizes a yearly seminar on autism and invites leaders in the field to speak, including Drs. Rimland, Temple Grandin, and Laurence Becker. Parents of children on the autism spectrum are also invited and share their stories with the students.


**WHAT WE DO**

**Consensus Reports**

ARI is collaborating with top researchers to write summary reports on known findings as well as areas requiring further investigation in their particular field of study (e.g., immunology, neurology, sleep, education, epigenetics, and adult issues).

**WHAT WE DO**

**Surveys**

Large-Scale Subtype Survey

If there are valid subtypes of autism, researchers will be in a much better position to study the underlying cause and the most effective treatments for each type of autism.

Senior Survey

We are conducting an online survey of seniors to collect data about autism through the entire lifespan. We anticipate that this study will inspire others as well as better inform the autism community, government agencies, and other welfare and health-related organizations about such quality-of-life issues. We hope the results will provide insight about the needs and challenges faced by seniors with autism (ages fifty and older) and their support providers.

ARI is the major source of research on autism that we search on for data related to effectiveness of approaches. Dr. Edelson has been so generous with his knowledge. We really appreciate you!”

— LUCY JANE MILLER, PhD, OTR
Founder, STAR Institute for SPD
Clinical Professor, Dept. of Pediatrics,
University of Colorado Denver
Professor of Pediatrics, Rocky Mountain University
Dr. Rimland publishes a printed science newsletter on autism, the Autism Research Review International. The first year was supported by a grant from Hasbro toys. It is still published today for thousands of subscribers.

Because of his publications on savant abilities, the producer of the movie *Rain Man* asks Dr. Rimland to be the head consultant. He suggests that Raymond, the lead character played by Dustin Hoffman, have autism rather than an intellectual impairment.

Dr. Edelson opens the Center for the Study of Autism (CSA) in Oregon, a research laboratory for ARI. The center conducts research on sensory related interventions and offers services. Families worldwide travel there to participate and learn how to help their children.

ARI is one of the few Autism research groups that I trust. We have benefited from webinars, specifically regarding helminths and PANS/PANDAS. We proudly advocate for ARI at every opportunity and wish for more breakthroughs in 2017, for all of us. Thank you for all that you do.”

— CYNDI GAILLARD
Mother to Victoria, pictured

WHAT WE DO
Webinars – Democratizing Learning

At the Autism Research Institute, we have focused on providing presentations that are unbiased and broad-reaching, to assist families and professionals in making informed treatment decisions. We also strive to provide professional education that gives thoughtful, inquisitive clinicians the means to offer appropriate support. We are grateful to the Johnson Center for Child Health & Development for working in partnership to offer many of these presentations.

*Thousands register for free ARI webinars each year and more than 225,000 viewers have watched free recordings of ARI’s webinars online at AutismWebinars.com. These webinars rely on generous donor support.*

WHAT WE DO
Language Translations

ARI offers translations of a variety of resources online at Autism.com. Along with content pages and selected on-demand videos, the Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC) is available to users in nineteen different languages.
The webcasts hosted by ARI should improve the health of children and adults with autism by virtue of providing education about medical and neurological etiologies associated with this complex disorder.”

— MARVIN NATOWICZ, MD, PhD
Clinical Geneticist and Clinical Pathologist
Cleveland Clinic’s Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Institute

**WHAT WE DO**

**Free Continuing Medical Education for Physicians**

ARI works in partnership with leading experts to provide professional education that gives thoughtful, inquisitive clinicians the means to offer support that is safe and effective.

Connecting physicians to improved standards of care is crucial to our mission — in joint providership with the Cleveland Clinic we continue to offer complimentary CME-certified online education to amplify understanding of the medical nature of the disorder.

This continuing medical education activity has been reviewed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and is acceptable for a maximum of 6.00 AAP credits. These credits can be applied toward the AAP CME/CPD Award available to Fellows and Candidate Members of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

All Internet users can view the *Autism Spectrum Disorders: Research and Medical Treatment Implications Parts 1 & 2* webcast series for free online. Learn more at ARI-CME.com.

In all our efforts, our urgent goal is to democratize access to the latest information for people with autism, parents, and professionals.

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1993

Dr. Rimland consults on *Frontline*’s “Prisoners of Silence,” and the movie *House of Cards*.

Dr. Rimland guides Catherine Maurice and promotes her book *Let Me Hear Your Voice: A Family’s Triumph Over Autism*, which brings widespread awareness of ABA.

1994

The Society of Auditory Integration Training (SAIT), co-sponsored by ARI and CSA, holds its first meeting.

Drs. Rimland and Edelson publish the first research paper examining the efficacy of auditory integration training (AIT).

1995

ARI convenes its first international think tank consisting of more than thirty researchers and expert physicians, focusing on medical co-morbidities associated with autism. This was the first recorded time that a group of professionals discussed GI issues associated with autism.
Think tank participants Sidney Baker, MD and Jon Pangborn, PhD agree to work closely with Dr. Rimland on this project. Later, Dr. Rimland uses the Defeat Autism Now! or DAN! protocol to describe this approach to GI issues associated with autism.

**Autism Research Review International**

From early days, ARI updated the autism community about research in the areas of behavioral, medical, education, sensory, and genetic issues. To that end, our founder began publishing a quarterly science newsletter, the *Autism Research Review International*, starting in 1987. Besides reporting on the most current and relevant research findings, Dr. Rimland wrote editorials to provide parents and professionals with his perspective. For many people, this newsletter, now also accessible online, is their main source of trusted information about science and autism.

**Understanding and Treating Self-Injurious Behavior in Autism**

Our latest book, *Understanding and Treating Self-Injurious Behavior in Autism* (2016), is a comprehensive analysis of this poorly understood behavior in people with ASD or related developmental disabilities, and the different methods available to treat them.

*ARI publications are available on Amazon.com.*

I met Bernard Rimland after reading his book, *Infantile Autism* in the 1970s. He was a true pioneer in our understanding that autism is a neurological condition.”

— TEMPLE GRANDIN

Author of *Thinking in Pictures* and *The Autistic Brain*
WHAT WE DO

Tools & Support

Autism.com
The advent of the Internet changed the autism community dramatically in the mid-1990s, and with Autism.com as its homepage, ARI has led the way since the “early days.” Today, ARI sponsors a Yahoo discussion group that gives parents the opportunity to ask questions and share information with one another. We also post information on a daily basis to Facebook, Twitter, FlipBoard, Google+ and Pinterest. These daily posts include descriptions of recent research studies and other important autism-related news.

Autism Treatment Effectiveness Checklist (ATEC)
A major obstacle in autism research has been the lack of a valid means of measuring the effectiveness of various treatments. Over the years, researchers have published hundreds of studies attempting to evaluate different biomedical and psycho-educational interventions intended to benefit those with autism. The Autism Treatment Effectiveness Checklist was developed by Dr. Rimland and Dr. Edelson to fill this need. Since its inception hundreds of thousands of ATEC forms have been completed.

Toll-free Telephone Hotline
ARI offers a free hotline for parents and professionals, who can reach a live person for information and support.

Special Support
ARI publishes a quarterly e-newsletter focused on individuals on the autism spectrum who are deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired and 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.

1999
Drs. Edelson and Rimland release the Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC) to help researchers, therapists, and parents assess treatment efficacy. Parents also rely on the ATEC to monitor their children’s progress over time. As of 2016, over a half million ATECs have been completed.

2003
Drs. Edelson and Rimland co-edit a book titled Treating Autism: Parent Stories of Hope and Success. A second, revised edition titled Recovering Autistic Children is published in 2006. This is one of the first books that discussed the possibility of recovery.

2004
ARI funds gastrointestinal (GI) research ($100K) at Harvard/Mass General. These funds were used as “seed money” to start the Autism Treatment Network.
Stewardship

It’s important our donors trust that we’re using our funding wisely to accomplish our mission of improving the health and wellbeing of people on the autism spectrum through research and the education of professionals, those who are affected, and their families.

The Autism Research Institute’s sound fiscal management practices and commitment to accountability and transparency have earned it a four-star rating from Charity Navigator. That rating demonstrates to supporters that we take our fiduciary and governance responsibilities very seriously.

Expenses Breakdown (FYE 12/2014)

Revenue/Expenses Trend

2005
The last edition of the Clinical Assessment Options for Children with Autism and Related Disorders booklet is published. This edition by Drs. Pangborn and Baker, titled Autism: Effective Biomedical Treatments, Have We Done Everything We Can for this Child?, contains 328 pages.

2006
Dr. Rimland passes away in November and leaves a monumental legacy of commitment and dedication to the autism community. The Board selects Dr. Edelson to become executive director of ARI.

2007
ARI launches a monthly e-newsletter.
ARI collaborates with Unlocking Autism to sponsor a toll-free resource center.
ARI begins a Rural Outreach Pilot Project to provide needed information to various regions in the U.S.

The Autism Research Institute (ARI) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization focused on conducting and sponsoring research aimed at improving the quality of life for today’s generation of children and adults with autism spectrum disorders. Donations are tax-deductible. Fed ID No. 95-2548452.
Why I Give to the Autism Research Institute

We have experienced firsthand the integrity of ARI, their research and their hearts for all kids on the spectrum.”

A Message of Hope

Our family has been involved with ARI since 1998 and they were a pivotal part of our journey with our son, Ry. ARI’s research showed us that Autism is Treatable — what a message of hope for so many families!

We are blessed to have been part of ARI’s story and legacy and we are eternally grateful to Dr. Steve Edelson and the entire ARI team. “Thank you” will never be enough for ARI’s fifty years of service.

ANGELENE ROWE

The Rowe family (left to right) Colby, Ethan, Jason, Angelene, Tanner, Christian, and Ry

2007

ARI enters an agreement with the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development and the University of Maryland to co-sponsor a tissue bank.

ARI begins a collaboration with the Autism Network for Hearing and Visually Impaired Persons.

2008

Dr. Rimland’s book, Dyslogic Syndrome, is published.

ARI converts a store front office into an art gallery. Dr. Rimland’s son, Mark, is the resident artist, and proceeds from the sales are used to fund research.

2010

ARI begins publishing a quarterly e-newsletter focused on topics related to adults on the spectrum. The editor is an adult on the spectrum, and the majority of the articles are written by people also on the spectrum.
ARI begins to sponsor online webinars.
ARI premieres a bimonthly e-newsletter for obstetricians, pediatricians, and nurses titled *Clinical Research in Autism.*
ARI receives NGO status from the U.N.
Dr. Edelson speaks in Russia and Ukraine.

2012
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ARI premieres a bimonthly e-newsletter for obstetricians, pediatricians, and nurses titled *Clinical Research in Autism.*
ARI receives NGO status from the U.N.
Dr. Edelson speaks in Russia and Ukraine.

2013
ARI begins co-sponsoring a think tank with Massachusetts General Hospital.
Two discussion panels at the United Nations on Autism Awareness Day are sponsored by ARI.
ARI co-sponsors a half-day conference on immunological factors, genes, and environment at the MIND Institute.
Dr. Edelson is a featured speaker in Russia and Ukraine and shares ARI resources with these countries.

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**High-Impact Success**

Donating to ARI always makes me feel good. I know Director Steve Edelson well enough to know that his heart and talents are in the right place for high-impact success in autism.

Also, watchdog organization Charity Navigator gives ARI its highest rating year after year for how efficiently it utilizes donations.

*Sallie Kirk*
Author, *Hope for the Autism Spectrum*

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**Making a Difference through Research**

We are strong supporters of research that will help us understand the underlying causes of autism, especially if they provide solutions on prevention as well as helping those who are alive today.

We are quite impressed with the Autism Research Institute’s dedication in their efforts to encourage and fund research as well as their support of the autism community.

We wish the Autism Research Institute another fifty years of making a difference in the lives of those affected with autism and their families.

**Abt Family Foundation**
*Chicago, IL*
ARI is instrumental in the release of the 50th anniversary edition of Dr. Rimland’s seminal book, *Infantile Autism*.

ARI co-sponsors a medical/biomedical think tank in Toronto with Autism Canada.

**Who We Are**

**Board of Directors**

Kimberly Taylor, JD  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD  
*Taylorsville, NC*

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TREASURER  
*Dublin, NH*

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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MANAGER  
ARI CALL CENTER

Denise Fulton, MS  
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR  
COMMUNICATIONS AND ONLINE LEARNING

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ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Gabriela Hennigan  
EXECUTIVE INTERN

Rebecca McKenney  
OFFICE MANAGER

Anthony Morgali  
PRODUCER  
ARI FILMS

"‘Autism is treatable’ in large thanks to Bernie and ARI and their work on educating parents, physicians, and researchers.”

— JAMES ADAMS, PhD  
Director  
Arizona State University  
Autism/Asperger’s Research Program

**2014**

ARI begins offering complimentary CME to physicians in joint-providership with the Cleveland Clinic Foundation.

ARI launches Autism.jobs site.

ARI produces a film on trauma in autism.

**2015**

ARI expands its regional think tanks to include New York.

ARI is instrumental in the publication of several articles on early identification and early intervention in *Pediatrics*. 
ARI launches an online job interview course for adults on the spectrum. Dr. Edelson and Mark Rimland serve as hosts on stage during a morning session at the 50th Anniversary ASA Conference in Denver, CO.

ARI is instrumental in the publication of the book Understanding and Treating Self-Injurious Behavior in Autism. Dr. Edelson co-authors a popular review paper on seizures in autism.

Physician webcasts are translated into Spanish and Portuguese. ARI’s YouTube channel offering free online education reaches 225,000 views.
Be a Hero. All Year Long.

$25/month for one year
funds six in-depth laboratory tests that contribute to research with the potential to affect every member of our community.

$50/month for one year
funds one webinar that offers free education and support for up to 10,000 viewers in real time.

$100/month for one year
funds complimentary continuing medical education programs for 175 medical professionals.

Please use the enclosed donation envelope or visit Autism.com/donations to give today.

Your monthly pledge OR one-time gift of ANY size will help us continue this important work in 2017 and beyond.

Donations are tax-deductible. Fed ID No. 95-2548452.
Give with confidence. ARI’s sound fiscal management practices and commitment to accountability and transparency have once again earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator.