

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In ARRI #2, 1987, our editorial mentioned that a report on the Higashi School in Tokyo was in preparation. Copies of the 20-page report, by B. Rimland, G. McGee, C. Roland and T. Risley, are now available for \$1.25 each; cost includes postage and handling. Send requests to the Institute for Child Behavior Research, 4182 Adams Ave., San Diego, CA 92116.

The Institute for Child Behavior Research is interested in receiving information about any children whose mothers or fathers have been diagnosed as autistic. If you know of cases in which autistic individuals have had children, please contact the Institute (see address above).

The Autism Society of America will host their annual conference July 13-16 in New Orleans, Louisiana. For information contact ASA, 1234 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 1017, Washington, D.C. 20005, or call (202) 783-0125.

The Third European Congress on "Autism - Today and Tomorrow" will be held May 6-8 in Hamburg, Germany. The conference is sponsored by the International Association Autism-Europe. For information write to: Bundesverband Hilfe für das autistische Kind e.V. (HAK), Bebelallee 141, D-2000, Hamburg 60, Germany.

HELP NEEDED!

The Institute for Child Behavior Research is attempting to evaluate various forms of treatment for autism by collecting assessments of the effectiveness of these treatments from the parents of children who have been treated. Right now we are seeking contact with parents whose children have been given one or more of the following treatments:

**AUDITORY TRAINING (BERARD OR TOMATIS)
HOLDING THERAPY
OPTIONS PROGRAM
SENSORY MOTOR INTEGRATION**

PARENTS: If your child has been treated with any of the above therapies, please send us a letter listing your name, address, phone number (optional), and the name of the treatment.

We will send you a simple, one-page questionnaire on which to report how effective the treatment was, and whether or not you would recommend that other parents consider trying the therapy on their children.

Also, please ask any of your friends who have used these treatments to contact us.

PROFESSIONALS: Your help in identifying parent-participants for these evaluations would be very much appreciated.

ALL DATA WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL. After we have collected sufficient data, we will share the results with interested parents and professionals.

Autism, other disorders linked

(Continued from page 1)

autistic children, the researchers theorize that the two disorders may involve defective metabolism of monoamines.

AUTISTIC SYMPTOMS AND EPILEPSY

Gillberg and Helen Schaumann also have reported two cases in which children with epilepsy were mistakenly diagnosed as autistic. Both children showed many symptoms of autism including echolalic speech, hyperactivity, aggression, stereotyped movements, and/or fixations on objects. Neither had obvious seizures, although both had "staring spells."

When the children were treated with anti-epileptic drugs, their autistic symptoms began to disappear, and their academic and social abilities improved dramatically. Both, however, still are mildly retarded.

The researchers say these cases show the importance of EEG testing in developmentally disabled children, even when overt signs of epilepsy are absent. They note that "the difficulty of differentiating psychotic and epileptic symptoms may sometimes be so great as to be clinically almost impossible."

AUTISM AND MOEBIUS SYNDROME

Moebius Syndrome, a disorder of the skull nerves controlling the facial muscles, causes paralysis of both sides of the face. It often results in vision difficulties or other nervous system defects, speech defects, and a variety of arm and leg problems.

Gillberg and I. Winnergard report that they have seen one five-year-old with both Moebius Syndrome and autism. They doubt that the co-occurrence of the diseases is coincidental, because both disorders are very rare.

An auditory brainstem response test showed clear-cut brainstem damage in the boy, leading the researchers to speculate that both disorders were caused by a brainstem defect. He also had high levels of homovanillic acid in his cerebro-spinal fluid (see "Autism and Neurofibromatosis," above).

AUTISM AND XYY

Gillberg, Winnergard and Jan Wahlstrom have seen one four-year-old autistic boy with an extra Y chromosome (normal males have one X and one Y chromosome). They also have seen one 10-year-old boy with XYY chromosomes and Asperger's Syndrome, which closely resembles high-functioning autism.

The four-year-old has seizures, and a CT scan test revealed mild atrophy of the posterior areas of his brain.

A list of the five references cited in this article is available upon request. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Institute for Child Behavior Research, 4182 Adams Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116, and specify that you are requesting references for the ARRI article on research by Christopher Gillberg et al.

Autopsy Studies

Dr. Margaret L. Bauman, whose findings of cerebellar defects in autism were discussed in ARRI Vol. 1, #1, has asked us to inform readers that in the unfortunate event of an autistic individual's death, the family can contact Dr. Bauman at Massachusetts General Hospital, (617) 726-3877, if they would be willing to allow her and her colleagues to perform a post-mortem examination of the brain. Information gained from Dr. Bauman's studies will greatly advance knowledge about the causes of autism.