

LETTERS

B6/DMG

To the Editor:

It is a long time since we started DMG. I just wanted to let you know we are both still better for it. Paul goes less onto auto-pilot now and functions more "multi-track" and less mono on more levels at once. Me—big changes—much less "wobbly throwing" (especially self-directed). Also—best news—Big Black Nothing attacks are fewer and far less extreme, and I can usually seek and ask (in some form) for help to cope with the associated terror....The terrible tremors and blood rushing in my ears and muscle flinching are mostly all gone.

Donna and Paul Venables
England

Editor's note: Donna Venables, formerly Donna Williams, is the author of Nobody Nowhere and Somebody Somewhere, detailing her experiences as an autistic child and adult. Her latest book, Anybody Anywhere, is in progress.

To the Editor:

Congratulations on your article on autism and recovery (ARRI 8/3). My son Michael was seen on the B6 and magnesium video released by ARI four years ago. Today at age 8 Michael has normal social skills, above-average intelligence, and reads on a sixth grade level with full comprehension. Vitamins gave us a toe-hold in his world without which this miracle would not have been possible. Keep sending out the message: recovery can happen. I pray every day that there will be many more Michaels.

Jean Curtin
Newark, NY

To the Editor:

I am the mother of an eight-year-old boy who is a high-functioning autistic. Even though he can communicate, he has not been able to develop friendships. Last March, I tried vitamin B6, magnesium and B complex on my son James. After about two weeks, we introduced DMG.

The results were amazing. He used to walk around people in the school yard as if they were snakes. Now he seems at ease and stops to talk to some kids. His teacher was not informed about this treatment but she said he gives her hugs, waves goodbye to people he knows, and plays tag with the others....

James is a lot more talkative and sociable. He is actually having fun with other kids....I know James is not cured and we still have some problems to handle but it is so much easier now.

Renelle Turuba
Hearst, Ontario, Canada

To the Editor:

I am Administrative Senior Behavior Analyst for Tacachale in Gainesville, Florida. This is a community of some 600 developmentally disabled adults. A num-

ber of the people who live here are autistic.

We have used megavitamin (B6/magnesium) therapy with two of Tacachale's autistic citizens. In both cases, staff report decreased agitation and increased attention span. These subjective reports were substantiated by these people's parents who, of course, approved the use of the procedure prior to its implementation.

Tom Moore, Tacachale
Gainesville, FL

To the Editor:

Enclosed are the results of a recent change of medication in one of our residents. This resident is an autistic individual who is 24 years old and severely mentally handicapped. He was banging his head,

hollering and biting his hands to the extreme that we were at a loss in how to deal with him....We thought we may have to give up and have him move to a better staffed facility. This is when a staff member saw your article on the use of Vitamin B6 and magnesium in *Woman's World* magazine, and I sent for more information. Graphs show that during baseline the resident had 44 bad shifts, a range of 0-2 out of 3 shifts and a mean of .94 bad shifts per day. Five months later he had 11 bad shifts, a range of 0-1 out of 3 shifts and a mean of .23 bad shifts per day....He has shown tremendous improvement and we thank you for your assistance.

Gary R. Stewart, M.A., Program Director
Bay Side Home ARC, Nova Scotia

Farm residences for autistic adults

As readers of the ARRI know, we have taken a firm editorial position on the need for a range of residential options, including farms and ranches, for autistic adolescents and adults who cannot live with their own families (ARRI 4/3, 5/3, 7/4). We have deplored the actions of the "advocates" who insist that only urban group homes or apartments are acceptable.

Recently parents in Michigan have tried to establish Rockwood Farm, a non-urban community for "people with special needs," only to run into strong opposition from the Autism Society of Michigan, whose then-director objected to the proposed facility as "segregated...antiquated, inappropriate and dehumanizing."

A major reason for my having founded the Autism Society of America thirty years ago was to increase the number of options available to the parents of autistic children, so I was especially appalled at the anti-option position of the Michigan ASA. I wrote a strong letter of support for Rockwood Farm, to the Michigan Department of Mental Health. My letter explained my support for the farm residential option for the handicapped as a relatively safe, unpolluted, productive and enjoyable place to live—away from the stressful urban jungles that

the advocates like to refer to as "the community." I mentioned how much my own autistic son had enjoyed his summer at the Benhaven Farm in Connecticut.

Just as I was about to seal my letter to the Michigan Department of Mental Health, a thought struck me that I added to the letter, and that I would like to share with our readers:

"If farm living is as unarguably inhumane and intolerable as the ASM apparently believes, why stop at banning farm life only for autistic children? Why not send Child Protective Services workers to all the farms to round up all the non-autistic children and make them live in cities? Why should their parents, the farmers, not be punished for abusing their children by making them live on (how awful!) farms? Why not declare it a crime for anyone to live on a farm?"

"These propositions are of course ridiculous—but no more so than the proposition that autistic persons may not live on farms."

—BR

Just published! European Farm Communities for Autism, Ed. by J. J. and N. S. Giddan (paperback), available from ARI, \$19.00 postpaid (CA residents add 7% tax).

AUTISM, CELIAC DISEASE GROUPS ON INTERNET

The Autism Discussion Group and the Celiac Disease Group are free discussion groups on Internet, a world-wide computer network. (Internet access is free at most colleges and universities, and many companies; commercial access is available through CompuServe, Prodigy, and other services.)

The Autism Discussion Group is an open, unmoderated discussion among over 500 members on autism, pervasive developmental disorders, Asperger's syndrome and related disorders. Topics include scientific research, drugs, behavior modification, diet, vitamins, vision therapy, auditory training, facilitated communication, and coping with the day-to-day problems caused by autism. Users can also search the archives of the Autism List via computer, to read prior discussions on any topic.

To subscribe to the Autism Discussion Group, send the following command in the BODY of email to LISTSERV@SJUVM.STJOHNS.EDU on the Internet: SUB autism yourfirstname yourlastname. For example: SUB autism John Doe.

Celiac disease involves an intolerance to gluten in wheat and other grains. Many parents and researchers feel autism is often caused by allergy or intolerance to wheat, cow's milk, and other food substances. The Celiac Discussion Group discusses topics including celiac disease, dermatitis herpetiformis, gluten intolerance, wheat allergy, and co-incident intolerances such as casein or lactose intolerance. Discussions include scientific research, information on which foods are gluten-free and which are not, tips on cooking or eating out, where to obtain gluten-free foods by mail, and how to cope with conditions sometimes brought on or aggravated by gluten (autism, Asperger's, attention deficit, etc.).

To subscribe to the Celiac Discussion Group, send the following command in the BODY of email to LISTSERV@SJUVM.STJOHNS.EDU on the Internet: SUB CELIAC yourfirstname yourlastname. For example: SUB CELIAC John Doe.

Both groups are open and unmoderated; therefore, information may not always be accurate. No commercial ads are allowed. Computer services have been donated by St. John's University in New York.