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# Defeat Autism Now!

## DEFEAT AUTISM NOW (DAN) CONFERENCE 2008

CHERRY HILL. NEW JERSEY

4th - 8th April 2008

**T**his was my fifth DAN Conference and every time I travel to the States to attend one I get very excited as each time fills me with optimism and extended knowledge and understanding of the many issues faced by individuals with autism.

Philadelphia was my destination this time. I landed on Wednesday evening in order to have Thursday for a shopping trip for which I had been given instructions by my daughter to find an Abercrombie and Fitch and stock up with clearance sale items! I managed to get out early on Thursday and jumped in a taxi to the centre of the city, where on entering a large mall I was informed that the nearest outlet was at the King of Prussia mall some forty minutes out of town! Typical! This time it was by bus.... a different experience! I was feeling quite good as I was mistaken for Arnold Schwarzenegger, I arrived, shopped for two hours and got two buses back to the hotel. Mission one accomplished....Bella, Billy, Toby and Polly sorted!

### **Mission two.**

As always the conference was inspirational and extensive in its coverage of autism research and treatments. I shall report on key note speakers who really impressed me at this conference but in view of the range of topics, I will split my report into two sections and complete it in Issue 29 of The Autism File out in September 2008.

My comments on the presentations by Dr Jon Pangborn, Dr Elizabeth Mumper and Dr Nancy O'Hara are covered in this issue and I will cover the presentations by Dr Ken Bock, Dr Jeff Bradstreet and Dr Sidney Baker in the next issue.

The DAN movement was initiated in the 1980s by Dr Bernard Rimland, Dr Jon Pangborn and Dr Sidney Baker. Bernie and Jon both have autistic sons. Sadly, Dr Bernie Rimland passed away a year and a half ago but both Jon and Sid are still massively influential in guiding the DAN movement forward.

The formal objective of "DAN" is stated as being "dedicated to the exploration, evaluation and dissemination of scientifically documented biomedical interventions for individuals within the autism spectrum, through the collaborative efforts of clinicians, researchers and parents".

It is very rare that such a diverse and overlapping range of expert individuals come together as a united force in any sector and therefore under the DAN remit, all the barriers of research are continuously tested and practised interventions are developed further and further. Autism is a multi-factorial disease that needs focused attention in all known areas and also needs experts to feel encouraged to delve into exploring the fields of unknown aetiology.

There were many lecturers spread over four days, including the two day 'Think Tank' which is a mini conference in itself inviting the world's best clinicians and researchers to join forces to discuss the latest findings and treatments available to the autistic community worldwide. This is a wonderful part of DAN, as the information is then made available worldwide and supports the constantly evolving treatment protocols for our children.

The first DAN conference was held in January 1995 and was only attended by forty individuals so this year was celebrated



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Maureen McDonnell RN

as the 10th major DAN conference and was attended by over 1300 individuals. It also provided an opportunity for its co-founders to say farewell to Maureen McDonnell RN, who has been the foundation stone in co-ordinating these conferences for over 10 years. She is an instrumental woman who has worked tirelessly for this movement and our thanks go to Maureen for her enthusiastic and dedicated work. Maureen inspirationally co-ordinated her new future by setting up:

“Saving our kids, healing our planet”, [www.SOKHOP.com](http://www.SOKHOP.com). This is a very contemporary concept, but a very real issue in addressing our toxic world and the impact that will have on our susceptible infants.

How do we raise a child in a toxic world?

Maureen will help us understand the answers. I could see from the support she received and the very moving tribute from Dr Sidney Baker. She will be very much missed from the DAN movement that we wish you all the very best with all of your endeavours, Maureen.

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**Dr Jon Pangborn** set the scene with a wonderful opening presentation.

### Overview of the DAN Biomedical Approach

Most causes of autism are treatable, with potentially significant outcomes. That’s because the underlying metabolic problems that most autistic individuals have are due to:

1. Metabolic effects of acquired toxicities and infectious agents that can often be remedied.
2. Epigenetic changes that can be reversed by treating inflammation and by removal of the instigating stressors.
3. Genetic traits that become sub clinical conditions after toxic and infectious stressors are removed.

The Autism Research Institute knows of 1100 families who have a former, documented diagnosis of autism of a child who is no longer classified as autistic.

Jon really highlighted the main areas of concern as methylation and transulfation impairments which drive many systems but fundamentally the abilities of the body to manufacture glutathione a powerful antioxidant. Glutathione attaches to toxicants (including mercury) and to other wastes changing them into extractable forms. This chemistry is disrupted by stressors including mercury, antimony, lead, arsenic, organo-chlorine, chemicals, phenolics, possibly xenobiotics,

paramyxoviruses and possibly too many vaccines.

Dr Pangborn believes that once initiated, the persistence of autism is due to three circumstances.

#### Why is your child autistic?

(For most >95%)

1. **Pre-existing weakness(es) in:**
  - Detoxification capacity
  - Antioxidant capacity
  - ‘One carbon’ metabolism (needs folate and vitamin B12)
  - Methionine to cysteine metabolism
  - Immune function

#### 2. Poor nutritional status

#### 3. Exposure to toxic or infectious stressors

#### WHAT TO DO?

1. Remove the stressors
2. Reset metabolic priorities
3. Support desired biochemistry and immunology

Jon Pangborn and Sidney Baker have written a wonderful book: **Autism: Effective Biomedical Treatments**.



Dr Elizabeth Mumper

My next summary report is by:  
**Dr Elizabeth Mumper.**

### Role of the Intestine in Health and Autism

Dr Mumper is the Medical Director of The Autism Research Institute and founder of The Rimland Center.

Dr Mumper stated, “the presence of gut disease, including food intolerance, intestinal inflammation and digestive enzyme impairment has been well documented” in autistic individuals. Many of us with autistic children who have gastrointestinal disturbances have seen and have recognised many common symptoms ranging from diarrhoea, constipation, abdominal pain, reflux, abdominal bloating, pale stools, possible food intolerance symptoms such as red ear lobes and flushed cheeks, skin rashes and a failure to thrive.

Dr Mumper identified that many so called “autistic behaviours” occur as a result of undiagnosed pain and that what is causing the pain needs investigation.

Many autistic children have extremely self-limiting diets, often eating less than five foods and therefore nutritional deficiencies are common such as zinc and selenium. The intestine is not only significant for digestion and absorption but also as an immune modulator. The immune system is modulated in the first two years of life by the composition of gut flora and exposure to food antigens.

Many of our children have received many courses of antibiotics especially in their first two years for commonly occurring

respiratory and ear infections, this has resulted in dysbiosis where an imbalanced population of gut bugs has occurred allowing for proliferation of pathogenic (bad) species such as clostridia and parasitic, viral and fungal species also. This commonly leads to intestinal inflammation and abnormal intestinal permeability which in turn might be associated with multiple food sensitivities. Inflammatory markers and histology studies have revealed inflammatory and autoimmune disease within some autistic individuals.

Dr Mumper summarised what to do.

#### The 6 R’s of gut rehabilitation

- 1. Remove** - sugars, junk food, preservatives, toxins, germs, gluten, casein and other allergens
- 2. Replenish** - healing diets, probiotics, enzymes, nutrients, zinc and fermented foods
- 3. Repair and restore** - Repair oxidative stress - alkalinize, antioxidants and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy
- 4. Restore immune modulation** (essential fatty acids, low dose Naltrexone, gamma globulins)
- 5. Repair hormonal abnormalities** (thyroid, adrenal)
- 6. Restore basic nutrition** - fresh, unprocessed, unrefined, unadulterated food.

#### Vary and rotate the diet

Hypoallergenic - look for red cheeks and red ears and foods that are craved.

Provide and give protein every 4-5 hours not necessarily meat e.g. quinoa and lentils are good vegetable protein sources.

Look also at special diets such as low oxalate, gluten and casein free, body ecology diet, specific carbohydrate diet etc.

There are many considerations as to what needs to be done. Specificity of treatment is absolutely critical depending on what does each child need to get and get rid of. Identification of the underlying problems is essential for a protocol to be devised by a clinical nutritionist who knows what problems to look for and how they can be treated.

Whether anti-inflammatory interventions are required, the use of probiotics, selecting the most appropriate diet and foods, anti fungals, antimicrobials antivirals and anti-parasitics, all have to be considered for treating the identifiable biomedical disturbances.

- **Take away what harms**
- **Give what heals**
- **Treat each child as unique**
- **Learn as much from what does not help as from the therapeutic triumphs**
- **Trust potential instincts**
- **Adjust clinical interventions depending on response of the child.**

Dr Mumper can be contacted through her practice at The Rimland Center  
[www.rimlandcenter.com](http://www.rimlandcenter.com)



Dr Nancy O’Hara

**Dr Nancy O’Hara - From A-Zinc.**

### Where to Begin

Dr Nancy O’Hara is a board-certified paediatrician graduating from the University of Pennsylvania school of medicine. She began her general practice in 1993 and in 1998 began her consultative, integrative practice solely for children with special needs. She is the liaison for medical monitoring for DAN and one of the leaders for the clinicians training in the US and abroad.

I am in the process of selecting a group of individuals who can be taught by a panel of experts from DAN who will be able to operate within the U.K. and Europe. There is a massive demand for this approach outside of the U.S.A and I am hoping to co-ordinate both training and a conference so we can all benefit. Watch this space.

“Each of our children is a tremendous gift. For our children on the autism

spectrum, the gift is wrapped in many layers of wrapping paper. These layers of wrapping represent problems in the gut with digestion, absorption and dysbiosis; problems in the immune system with allergies, inflammation and autoimmune disorders; and problems in the detoxification system, with an inability to remove germs, allergens, chemical and metals from their systems. We need to unwrap each layer to let the true gifts of our children shine through."

"There has been a paradigm shift away from thinking of autism as a static encephalopathy, without hope of change or treatment, toward a new paradigm that conceptualises autism as a medical systems disorder affecting multiple organs and parts of the body".

Look at the problems and clues?

#### Genetic predisposition

- Family history of autoimmune, gastrointestinal and inflammatory problems.
- Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (pieces of the genes missing)
- Increased susceptibility
- Neurological problems - altered sensitivity, abnormal processing

#### Immune system dysregulation

- Decreased Secretory IgA and Natural Killer cells
- Abnormal immune processing, auto-immune antibodies, T Helper cell 1 and T Helper cell 2 skewing.

#### Digestive Abnormalities

- Maldigestion (altered enzyme function)
- Dysbiosis (change in gut flora)
- Increased permeability (antigens, peptides, toxins)
- Inflammation (enterocolitis, lymphoid nodular hyperplasia, pro inflammatory cytokines, calprotectin)

#### Biomedical peculiarities

- Impaired detoxification
- Oxidative stress
- Mitochondrial defects

#### Metabolic Dysfunction

## STEPS TO HELP

### 1. CLEAN UP THE GUT (food and flora) - select diet and avoid allergenic foods

- Methyl B12
- Anti-fungal trial - probiotics/ sacchomyces boulaardi
- Casein free
- Digestive enzymes
- Multivitamin/mineral

### 2. ENHANCE DETOXIFICATION

- Through transdermal TTFD/ Glutathione and second tier of supplements to support detoxification mechanisms.
- Look at specific issues to remove germs such as streptococcal infection causing PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders associated with Streptococcal infection) Look for ASO Ab - (antibody specific to strep).
- Treat bacterial infections -such as probiotics and prebiotics, sacchomyces boulaardi, antibiotics, vancomycin, metrodiazole and nitazoxaride, homoeopathic/herbals/ HBOT.
- Parasites - BACTRIN, probiotics, anti-parasitics (metronidazole, paromomycin, mebendazole), natural remedies, artemesia, pumpkin seeds, coconut.
- Use of herbal remedies, (Garlic 1-2 fresh cloves/day), Caprylic acid (500-1000 mg with meals), Oregano oil (0.2 ml 2x/day), Grapefruit or citrus seed extract (1/3 adult dose), Sacchomyces Boulaardi (3-6 caps/ day)

### 3. REMOVE TOXINS

- Detoxification enhance mechanisms
- Chelation
- Homoeopathy

### 4. REPLENISH

- Glutathione (oral, inhaled, transdermal, IV)
- Digestive Enzymes
- Probiotics

- Support yeast 'die off' with activated charcoal and alka seltzer Gold (alkaline)
- Anti-glutamates - pycnogenol, chamomile, Taurine, GABA, Vitamin K, treat high ammonia -activated charcoal, fibre, pectin, yucca
- Nutrients - zinc, magnesium, calcium, molybdenum, selenium, all B vitamins, amino acids, phosphatidyl choline, spronolactone -anti-inflammatory and reducing testosterone.
- Oxytocin - reduces aggression and anxiety.
- Melatonin - regulates serotonin balance and mood and sleep disturbances.

Dr Nancy O'Hara is one of the DAN practitioners along with, in no particular order Dr Elizabeth Mumper, Dr Ken Bock, Dr Jeff Bradstreet, Dr Sidney Baker, Dr Bryan Jepson and Dr Jerry Kartzinel I would look to for treating any child on the spectrum. They all have vast experience and expertise in ASD and I would recommend all of them to anyone wanting some of the world's finest in helping our children.

For me this DAN has provided a wonderful summary of the biomedical aberrations associated with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. There is a much brighter future for our children, we have to be instrumental in helping them achieve perfect health and in doing so will enable them to fulfil their true potentials. It is very common for me to see a child in clinic who, on the surface looks like any typical child with very few symptoms that may reveal hidden issues. How can we really tell what is going on inside from looking at surface issues? Metabolic defects, detoxification impairments, immune distortion and many gastrointestinal issues are all hidden and it is through the use of expert diagnostic tests can these abnormalities be identified and whenever possible treated.

As always much of the effort has to be initiated by you but there are experts who are out there that can help.

I look forward to presenting my final report in the next issue.

