



### OAR's Values

**To understand OAR is to understand the spirit in which OAR operates. The following principles underlie everything OAR does. We provide this information as a statement of values and a simple means of “getting to know” OAR for anyone unfamiliar with the organization, its leadership, volunteers and staff.**

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- 1. The Community Comes First.** OAR exists to serve the autism community. OAR's policies, programs, decisions, and actions place the best interests of the community-at-large ahead of any other group or personal interests.
- 2. Practical Research for the Living.** OAR's focus is on research that yields results and findings that have practical applications for those living with autism today--the children and adults on the autism spectrum, their families, and all those who give them love and support.
- 3. Self-Advocacy/Self-Determination.** OAR understands that some persons with autism are capable of representing themselves and achieving a high degree of independence in life. OAR will give self-advocates roles and a voice in its Community Council.
- 4. Family Focus.** Autism has a direct and often varying effect on each member of the family. OAR views the disorder in this broader context and will encourage research that illuminates and examines the impact of autism within the family dynamic.
- 5. Quality Information.** OAR will strive to provide high quality, useful information, free of bias, and appropriately referenced whenever possible.
- 6. Taking a Stand.** OAR will not hesitate to speak on matters of importance to the autism community, particularly on research matters that fall within the collective expertise of OAR's Scientific Council or the scope of any of OAR's studies.
- 7. Free Access for the Community.** Parents and families pay enough. OAR will not assess dues or charge any access fees. OAR will raise money in order to provide members of the autism community free access to OAR's information resources.
- 8. “By the People, for the People.”** OAR holds itself accountable to the autism community. In that vein, OAR believes that its best measure of success will come in the form of feedback from those OAR serves. Those inputs will help OAR maintain focus and direction.
- 9. One Cause, Many Good Organizations.** There are many good autism-related organizations. OAR believes that there is strength and purpose in those numbers, particularly for a cause as broad and complex as autism. OAR will collaborate whenever and wherever it best serves the autism community and the mutual objectives of any other organization and OAR.
- 10. Opening More Doors.** Autism abounds with personal stories of love, determination, and inspiration emerging from even the most dismal circumstances. Full of humor and distinctively lacking in self-pity, various authors acknowledge that life has challenges more difficult than autism, and they build on the theme “When one door closes, another opens.” OAR will complement this rich environment by opening doors to the serious issues in its mission with spirit, enthusiasm, and optimism.