



Gerald Koocher Joins OAR's Scientific Council

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 1, 2008

Contact: Wendy McKinnon, Programs and Outreach Associate

(703)243-3466, scholarship@researchautism.org

Arlington, VA- OAR is pleased to announce the addition of Gerald Koocher, Ph.D. to its Scientific Council. "We are delighted to add a professional like Dr. Koocher to the Scientific Council," says OAR President Peter Gerhardt. "Just one look at his impressive experience will tell you immediately that he is eminent in his field."

Dr. Koocher's expertise in ethical aspects of psychology practice and research, psychological assessment, and mental health malpractice will bring added depth and perspective to an already impressive Scientific Council, particularly as he fills the seat (and role) vacated by Dr. Robert Sprague upon his retirement from the Council.

Dr. Koocher, dean and professor of the School for Health Studies at Simmons College in Boston and lecturer in psychology at Harvard Medical School, has a combination of research, teaching, and clinical experience that focuses on the professional and ethical aspects of psychology practice and scientific research. He also works with children and adults coping with chronic or life-threatening illnesses (especially cancer, cystic fibrosis, and diabetes). He also serves on the NIMH Data Safety Monitoring Board that monitors autism studies.

Dr. Koocher lectures and supervises interns and post-docs at Harvard Medical School, while holding other appointments at Boston's Children's Hospital, where he was the chief pediatric psychologist for 13 years before moving to Simmons College. He still donates time one day a week at the Children's Hospital, managing two or three children's cases and supervising psychology interns.

ABOUT OAR: The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) is a national, nonprofit organization formed and led by relatives of children and adults with autism and Asperger Syndrome. OAR is dedicated to promoting research that can be applied to help families, educators, caregivers, and individuals with autism find much-needed answers to their immediate and urgent questions. Committed to the excellence in its services to the autism community, OAR funds applied research that will make a difference in individual lives; provides information that is timely, useful, and cost-efficient; and offers opportunities for the autism community to collaborate and make advances together.

In its first five years, OAR has awarded more than \$1,000,000 for applied research studies and published four community-friendly resource guides in its Life Journey through Autism guide series: *A Parent's Guide to Research*, *An Educator's Guide to Autism*, *An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome*, and *A Guide for Transition to Adulthood*.