



Organization for Autism Research Publishes *An Educator's Guide to Autism*

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ARLINGTON, VA — *An Educator's Guide*, the second book in the *Life Journey through Autism* series of resource guides published by the Organization for Autism Research (OAR), is now available. OAR, a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to apply research to the daily challenges that people living with autism and their families must face, is distributing the *Guides* free of charge to education professionals and parents of children with autism as part of their national autism education initiative. *An Educator's Guide* provides parents, teachers and education professionals with a six-step plan for teaching a child with autism in the general elementary classroom setting.

“With the current emphasis on teaching children with autism and developmental disabilities in the inclusive classroom and the increasing numbers of children being diagnosed on the autism spectrum, more and more general classroom teachers are teaching children with autism for the first time,” said Michael V. Maloney, Executive Director of OAR. “With this goal in mind, we have developed *An Educator's Guide* as a resource to provide a working understanding of autism and a practical approach to establishing the most beneficial learning environment for the student with autism and his or her typical peers. Based on the feedback we have received so far from educators who have viewed the *Guide*, we are confident that it will prove to be a useful resource.”

The heart of the *Educator's Guide* is a six-step approach for a teacher preparing to teach a child with autism in his or her classroom. The steps include: (1) educate yourself (2) reach out to parents (3) prepare the classroom (4) educate peers and set social goals (5) collaborate on the implementation of an educational program and (6) manage behavioral challenges. The discussion of each step includes practical tips on what a teacher should look for and how to navigate the challenges that may arise. Following these steps offers the teacher the potential to create the most favorable educational environment for all learners in the classroom, including the student with autism.

Since the publication of *An Educator's Guide* in October, 2004, OAR has already received requests and distributed more than 500 copies of the guidebooks to educators, parents and autism professionals across the country. *The Educator's Guide* is the second in OAR's *Life Journey Through Autism* series. In December 2003, OAR published *A Parent's Guide to Research*, which provides parents and families with the basics of autism research in a concise and user-friendly way. *A Parent's Guide to Research* lays a strong foundation for those who are new to the complex process of finding and evaluating autism information. In addition, OAR is currently producing *An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome*, slated for publication in June, 2005.

To request a hardcopy of *An Educator's Guide* or *A Parent's Guide to Research*, email OAR@researchautism.org, and include your name and mailing address, or call 703-351-5031. *The Guide* can also be viewed online by visiting OAR's website, <http://www.researchautism.org/educators.asp> and clicking on the *Educator's Guide* icon in the right

hand navigational bar.

About OAR: The Organization for Autism Research was formed by parents and grandparents of children and adults with autism in December 2001. Recognizing that autism affects over 500,000 individuals in the United States alone, these founding Board members wanted to create a research foundation that would focus on practical research for the generation of people living with autism today. OAR, born of this vision, seeks to use applied research to help with the challenges parents, families, individuals with autism, teachers and caregivers confront every day. With this mission always in mind, OAR stimulates and funds research that offers practical insight and outcomes related to autism treatment, education, and research, and also provides the autism community with resources and information programs based on this applied research. In its first three years, OAR has awarded 12 grants totaling \$360,000 for applied research pilot studies, made \$11,000 in grants to graduate students conducting research related to autism and published two community-friendly resource guides in our *Life Journey through Autism* guide series: *A Parent's Guide to Research* and *An Educator's Guide*.