



**OAR LAUNCHES OPERATION AUTISM  
New Web Site Focuses on Military Families and Autism**

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ARLINGTON, VA– The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) launched Operation Autism today, a website for military families that have children with autism. The site offers information on autism, autism treatments, the military healthcare system, and raising a child with autism in the military community. The project, funded by a grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, has been under construction all year. The finished product reflects the combined efforts of OAR’s staff, project interns, a great design team, and most importantly, the direct contributions of military families.

“Autism presents many challenges to parents and families under normal circumstances,” said OAR Executive Director Mike Maloney. “For parents in uniform, the challenges of having a child are often magnified. Moreover, military families often face additional challenges that are unique to military life and service. Our purpose in creating Operation Autism is to offer a friendly, inviting, and useful resource tailored to the needs of these families.”

Operation Autism, [www.operationautismonline.org](http://www.operationautismonline.org), offers information to a wide audience: expecting parents, parents of young children interested in early childhood developmental milestones, parents newly diagnosed children and parents who have been “in the trenches” dealing with autism for years. Resources are also available for immediate and extended family members, teachers, and others who work with or serve the needs of children with autism. The website features five main content areas: Autism 101, Raising a Child with Autism, Autism & Military Healthcare, Educating Children with Autism, and Tips for PCS Moves & Other Transitions. The listed content areas are supported by a Search for Resources section that includes a variety of useful links, as well as a resource directory that provides information on schools, services, and supports available at or near military installations.

“This has been a huge undertaking,” Maloney said. “We are excited by Operation Autism’s potential to serve the needs of military families touched by autism. But the true test begins today. I expect that the feedback we receive from military families will challenge us to do even more. We look forward to that.”

In addition to the new website, OAR is developing Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families, a hard publication intended as a the website’s companion piece. The new guidebook will be available in January.

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.

Since 2001, OAR has awarded more than \$2.2 million to fund 112 applied research studies and published six community-friendly resource guides in its *Life Journey through Autism* series. OAR introduced the Schwallie Family Scholarship Program offering college and vocational school scholarships to individuals with autism spectrum disorders in 2007, and in 2009 and 2010 produced Operation Autism, [www.operationautismonline.org](http://www.operationautismonline.org), a web-based resource for military families touched by autism, and a companion resource guide, *Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families*.

For more information about OAR, please visit [www.researchautism.org](http://www.researchautism.org).