



OAR Celebrates Autism Awareness Day with New Educational Resource

Autism Tuned In Website Uses Videos and Games to Teach Students about Autism

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 30, 2017

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ARLINGTON, VA – In celebration of Autism Awareness Day, The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) today announced the launch of *Autism Tuned In*, www.autismtunedin.org, a new e-learning website that teaches today's youth about autism. This peer education resource is an online variant of the popular *Kit for Kids* program that has impacted more than 80,000 students since 2012. The site includes eight modules, each with short animated videos and activities that reinforce student understanding of autism in a fun and engaging way.

“From the moment we introduced the Kit for Kids and saw the response, we wanted to reach more students, build on the lesson, and add depth to the learning experience,” notes Mike Maloney, OAR Executive Director. “The accessibility and flexibility of Autism Tuned In helps us do all three well.”

Autism Tuned In allows teachers to track student progress and completion. Each of the eight modules begin with a cartoon animated video that captures children's attention and ends with a student activity, such as matching and fill-in-the-blank games. *Autism Tuned In* not only reinforces knowledge learned about autism, but also addresses topics that are important for every child to explore: being different, understanding others, expressing oneself, and using one's senses. The website can serve as a standalone resource or be used along with the hard copy *Kit for Kids* materials. Teachers can assign activities as computer classwork or homework. OAR offers no-cost rewards for students that complete all of the online activities.

“The impact that Nick's story has made on the autism community in just a few years has been quite impressive,” says Kimberly Ha, Research and Programs Director. “Our goal is to build on this success by making it more accessible to others, while re-engaging those already familiar with him.”

OAR's *Kit for Kids* is a set of peer education materials that teaches elementary and middle school students about their peers with autism. The kit is anchored by a colorful booklet called, “What's up with Nick?” and includes a lesson plan, poster, and printable activity workbooks. The purpose of the program is to promote more inclusive classrooms where students with autism are respected and valued. Since it was first released in April 2012, OAR has impacted more than 80,000 students across the United States, Vietnam, Botswana, the UK, and more.

Autism Tuned In was made possible by a generous grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (ALCWF).

You can access the e-learning website at www.autismtunedin.org. Hard copy *Kit for Kids* materials can also be accessed at <http://researchautism.org/resources/kit-for-kids/>. To discuss how to implement a



peer education initiative at your school, please contact Kimberly Ha, Research and Programs Director, at 703-243-9762 or programs@researchautism.org.

About OAR: The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) is a national non-profit organization formed and led by relatives of children and adults with autism. Since 2001, 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. Learn more at their website: www.researchautism.org.

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