The First Canada-Israel Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Meeting

March 2-4, 2014

Organizers: Asher Ornoy, Chairman (The Hebrew University)
Abraham Fainsod (The Hebrew University)
Connie Putterman (Canadian Friends of The Hebrew University, Toronto)
Lonnie Zwaigenbaum (University of Alberta)

The Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Research Hub at the Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada and the Canadian Friends of The Hebrew University invite you to the First Canada-Israel Autism (ASD) Research Symposium, to be held at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Givat Ram, Jerusalem, Israel. The Symposium will be held Sunday March 2nd until Tuesday March 4, 2014. The event will bring together researchers in Autism and in specialized areas as they relate to Autism from Israel and Canada. It will create opportunities for presentations, round table discussions, campus and other tours and informal gatherings.

Objectives:
• To create and foster partnerships in autism research between Canadian and Israeli researchers
• To highlight expertise in both countries that address needs for research and affect treatment outcomes

To bring to those interested in Autism updated clinical and research knowledge

All lectures will take place at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, Feldman Building, Room 130 (floor 1), The Edmond J. Safra, Givat Ram Campus
Program

**Sunday March 2nd**

8:45-09:15 Opening comments: **David Lichtstein** (Dean of The Hebrew University Hadassah Medical School), **Connie Putterman**, **Haya Loberbaum Galski**, **Asher Ornoy**

**Session 1: Genetics and Epigenetics of ASD**  
Chairperson: **Peter Szatmari** (Canada)

9:15-9:40 **Sagiv Shifman** (Department of Genetics, The Institute of Life Sciences, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)  
*Master Regulators, Phenotypic Robustness and Autism Risk*

9:40-10:05 **Yoav Kohn** (Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center and Eitanim Psychiatric Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel)  
*Detection and Characterization of Copy Number Variations in Jewish Israeli Autistic Patients*

10:05-10:30 **Peter Szatmari** (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto and the University of Toronto, Canada)  
*The Complex Genetic Architecture of Autism Spectrum Disorder*

10:30-10:55 **Moshe Szyf** (Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, McGill University, Montreal, Canada)  
*Are Epigenetic Changes a Plausible Mechanism in ASD?*

10:55-11:20 **Rosanna Weksberg** (The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto and the University of Toronto, Canada)  
*Do Epigenetic Changes Contribute to the Etiology of Autism Spectrum Disorder?*

11:20-11:40 Discussion

**11:40-12:00 Coffee break**

**Session 2 - Short Communications**  
Chairperson: **Abraham Fainsod** (Israel)

12:00-12:15 **Muhammad Mahajnah** (The Child Neurology and Development Center, Hillel Yaffe Medical Center, Hadera, The Ruth and Bruce Rappaport Faculty of Medicine, Technion, Haifa, Israel)  
*Clinical Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Israel: Impact of Ethnic and Social Diversities*
12:15-12:30 **Michael Beenstock** (Department of Economics, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
*Behavioral Etiology of ASD Recurrence: Population Evidence from Israel*

12:30-12:45 **Anna Remington** (Centre for Research in Autism and Education, Institute of Education, London, UK)
*Increased Perceptual Capacity in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

12:45-13:00 **Itai Berger** (The Neuro-Cognitive Center, Pediatric Division, Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel)
*Improving ADHD Diagnosis among Autistic Children*

13:00-13:15 **Meir Lotan** (Physical Therapy Department, Faculty of Medical Science, Ariel University, Ariel; Alut- the Israel National Autism Association, Givatayim, Israel)
*Motor Assessment of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder Using a New/Shorter Version of the Peabody*

13:15-13:30 **Hagai Levine** (Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Hebrew University Hadassah Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel)

13:30-14:30 Lunch

**Session 3 - Lessons for ASD from other neurobehavioral disorders**

**Chairperson: Albert Chudley** (Canada)

14:30-14:55 **Lidia Gabis** (Weinberg Child Development Center, Edmond and Lilly Safra Children's Hospital, Tel Hashomer and Tel Aviv University, Israel)
*Phenotypic Presentations within the Autism Spectrum of Fragile X Premutation and Full Mutation, and its Possible Therapeutic Implications*

14:55-15:20 **Bruria Ben-Zeev** (Pediatric Neurology Unit and the Israel Rett Centre, Edmond and Lilly Safra Children's Hospital, Sheba Medical Center, Israel)
*Rett Syndrome - Current Understanding of Phenotype and Underlying Pathogenesis Leading to Clinical Studies and Intervention Trials*

15:20-15:45 **Abraham Fainsod** (Institute of Medical Research Israel-Canada, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)
*Alcohol Reduces Retinoic Acid Signaling, An Important Regulator of Calcium Signaling, Brain Development and Oxytocin Secretion in FASD*

15:45-16:10 **Albert Chudley** (Department of Pediatrics, Biochemistry and Medical Genetics, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada)
*Lessons for ASD from other Neurobehavioral Disorders*
16:10-16:30 Discussion

16:30-16:50 Coffee break

16:50-18:00 Posters

1. **Anat Zaidman – Zait** (Department of School Counseling and Special Education, Tel Aviv University and Human Early Learning Partnership, University of British Columbia, Canada) *Predictors of Parenting Stress Over Time in Families of Young Children with ASD*

2. **Judah Koller** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel) *The Role of Temperament in Understanding Toddlers with ASD*

3. **Meir Lotan** (Physical Therapy Department, Faculty of Medical Science, Ariel University, Ariel; Alut- the Israel National Autism Association, Givatayim, Israel) *Initial Clinical Report Regarding the Thera Togs Pressure Garments for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*

4. **Yasmine Khateeb** (Haifa, Israel) *Social Information Processing in Preschool Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

5. **Odeda Peled** (The Integrative Therapy Center, Developmental and Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation, Maccabim, Israel) *The Child behind the Syndrome*

6. **Meir Lotan** (Physical Therapy Department, Faculty of Medical Science, Ariel University, Ariel; Alut- the Israel National Autism Association, Givatayim, Israel) *The Impact of Horseback Riding on Education, Cognitive, Physical- Motoric, Social and Behavioral Aspects of Children with ASD*

7. **Meir Lotan** (Physical Therapy Department, Faculty of Medical Science, Ariel University, Ariel; Alut- the Israel National Autism Association, Givatayim, Israel) *Motor Difficulties Presented by Children with ASD Suggest a Need for Physical Therapy as Core Early Intervention for this Group of Clients- A Review of the Literature*

8. **Moria Gamliel** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel) *The Oxytocin- CD38-Vitamin A Axis in Pregnant Women Involves both Hypothalamic and Placental Regulation*

9. **Antonio Narzisi** (University of Pisa- Stella Maris Scientific Institute, Pisa, Italy) *Treatment As Usual (TAU) for Preschoolers with Autism: Insight from the Artificial Neural Networks Analyses*

10. **Michal Begin** (Hadassah Medical Organization, Jerusalem, Israel) *Post-Natal CXCR4 Levels in Preterm Infants of ASD*
11. Sarah Eyal (School of Pharmacy, Hebrew University Hadassah Medical School, Jerusalem, Israel) *The Effects of Valproic Acid on the Placental Barrier*

18:00 Welcome reception

Monday, March 3rd

Session 4 - Prenatal Causes of ASD
Chairperson: Rosanna Weksberg (Canada)

9:00-9:30 David Mankuta (Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Hadassah Hebrew University Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel) *The Possible Role of the Obstetrician in Reducing the Risk of ASD*

9:30-9:50 Asher Ornoy (Hebrew University Hadassah Medical School and Israeli Ministry of Health, Jerusalem, Israel) *Valproic Acid and Maternal Diabetes during Pregnancy as Possible Causes of ASD*

9:50-10:20 Filippo Muratori and Sara Calderoni (IRCCS Stella Maris and University of Pisa, Italy) *Structural Magnetic Resonance Imaging Neuroanatomy in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*

10:20-10:50 Tim Oberlander (Department of Pediatrics and School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia Vancouver BC, Canada) *Early Life Serotonin Signaling and Risk for ASD: Clues from Studies of Children with Prenatal SSRI Antidepressant Exposure*

10:50-11:10 Discussion

11:10-11:30 Coffee break

Session 5 - Short communications
Chairperson: Abraham Fainsod (Israel)

11:30-11:45 Enzo Grossi (Villa Santa Maria Institute, Tavernerio, Como, Italy) *Prediction of Autism from Risk Factors Related to Pregnancy and to Pre/Post Natal Period: A Pilot Study with Artificial Neural Networks*

11:45-12:00 Evan Elliott (Faculty of Medicine, Bar-Ilan University, Israel) *DNA Methylation Analysis of the Autistic Brain Reveals Multiple Dysregulated Biological Pathways*
12:00-12:15 **Benjamin K. Klein** (Department of Developmental Neuroscience, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, USA) *Oxytocin Protects Cells from Stress*

12:15-12:30 **Sheli Friedman** (Institute of Drug Research, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel) *The Involvement of the Allergic Inflammatory System in the Development of Autism Spectrum Disorder during Prenatal Life*

12:30-12:45 **Nirit Brosh** (Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada) *Acoustic Measurements of Prosodic Information in Toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders*

12:45-13:00 **Benjamin Gesundheit**, Jerusalem Israel. *Immunological Features in Autism Spectrum Disorder – Targets for Innovative Treatment?*

13:00-13:45 Lunch

13:45 -18:00 Organized Tour of Jerusalem

20:00-23:00 Banquet

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**Tuesday, March 4th**

8:30-17:30 ASD – What is New in Our Understanding and Treatment
Open to caregivers and families

8:30-9:00 Gathering

9:00-09:05 **Greetings: Michal Linial**, (IIAS Director, Jerusalem, Israel)

9:05 – 9:25 **Lihi Lapid**, Israel (introduced by Asher Ornoy)
*Ways to Empower Mothers of Autistic Children*

9:25-9:50 **Connie Putterman**, Canada (introduced by Michal Begin)
*Parents of Children with ASD Share Feelings and Needs*

9:50-10:10 **Nurit Yirmiya** (Department of Psychology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)
*A Longitudinal Study of Resolution with the Diagnosis of Autism among Mothers and Fathers of Children with ASD*
10:10-11:50  **ASD: Overview, Epidemiology and Services in Israel and Canada**  
*Chairperson: Lonnie Zwaigenbaum* (Canada)  
10:10-10:35 **Wendy Roberts** (Department of Pediatrics, University of Toronto, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada)  
*Overview of ASD Services in Canada: What Families Experience*  
10:35-10:50 **Asher Ornoy** (Hebrew University Hadassah Medical School and Israeli Ministry of Health)  
*Services for Children with ASD in Israel*  
10:50-11:15 **Helene Oullette-Kuntz** (Department of Public Health Sciences, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada)  
*ASD Epidemiologic Research in Canada*  
11:15-11:40 **Michael Davidovitch** (Maccabi Healthcare Services, Israel)  
*Prevalence and Incidence of Autism Spectrum Disorder in an Israeli Population*  
11:40-11:50 Discussion  

11:50-12:10 Coffee break  

12:10-13:20 **Early Diagnosis of ASD:**  
*Chairperson: Nurit Yirmiya* (Israel)  
12:10-12:40 **Lonnie Zwaigenbaum** (Department of Pediatrics, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada)  
*Early Detection and Diagnosis of ASD: Insights from High-Risk Infant Studies*  
12:40-13:10 **Cory Shulman** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)  
*Early Diagnosis and DSM5 Criteria*  
13:10-13:20 Discussion  

13:20-14:00 Lunch break  

14:00-16:10 **New Treatment Modalities and Assessment of Outcomes**  
*Chairperson: Wendy Roberts* (Canada)  
14:00-14:30 **Ditza A. Zachor** (The Autism Center, Pediatric Department, Assaf Harofeh Medical Center, Tel Aviv University, Israel)  
*Predictors of Outcome Trajectories with Early Intensive Intervention in Autism Spectrum Disorders*
14:30-15:00 Hanna Alonim (The Mifne Center and School of Social Work Science, Bar-Ilan University, Israel)  
*Identification of Very Early Signs of Autism; Implications of Clinical and Treatment Evidence*

15:00-15:30 Evdokia Anagnostou (Bloorview Research Institute, Department of Pediatrics, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada)  
*Future Directions in Translational Therapeutics in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*

15:30-16:00 Jonathan Weiss (Department of Psychology, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada)  
*Supporting Mental Health in Individuals with ASD: Moving beyond Anxiety*

16:00-16:10 Discussion

16:10-16:30 Coffee break

16:30-17:30 Round table general discussion  
Chairpersons: Asher Ornoy and Lonnie Zwaigenbaum  
*The Universality of ASD: What Can We Learn from Each Other?*