

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DAN! success

To the Editor:

I became involved with autistic children and the DAN! protocol purely by accident early in 1996. Since then I have gotten very involved in treating these beautiful kids and I often reflect on how fortunate I am to be doing this.

Seeing their dramatic improvement after instituting the various dietary and nutritional interventions described in the protocol is one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. It has renewed my interest in the science of medicine and has made me feel like a "real" doctor again.

It is wonderful to be doing something special for such a deserving group of patients.

Jeffrey C. Kopelson, M.D.
Brewster, NY

To the Editor:

Thank you so much for your referral to Dr. John Wakefield, in Saratoga, California,

who put my son on the DAN! [Defeat Autism Now!] protocol.

A little over a year ago, my son at three-and-a-half had almost no expressive language, very limited language, and a tremendous amount of visual stims. He stimmed on fans, vacuums, and lights. He stimmed on the vacuum cleaner for up to 8 hours a day. He was steeped in rituals. He was completely in his own world. He could not answer the question, "What is your name?" or any other question.

After using a combination of the DAN! protocol and ABA (discrete trials therapy provided by CARD), my son, now almost five, has made enormous progress.

The most helpful thing, in my opinion, was the DAN! protocol. We tested his blood for allergies, as the DAN! protocol recommended. He turned out to have very strong allergies for gluten and dairy products. Dr. Wakefield helped me plan a diet to get him off dairy and gluten products, and we also tested his urine for metabolites, as recommended by the DAN! program.

I also give him one tablet of DMG and about one-half teaspoon of Super Nu Thera. I also give him supplements like calcium, since he no longer eats dairy products.

The visual stims are virtually gone. He is in OUR world and loving it. His language is still very delayed. He is catching up and is surprising us with his initiation. His receptive language has improved, also, by leaps and bounds. We do have a long way to go, but I am so grateful to you for organizing the DAN! conference, to give us hope for our children.

Mary Holford
San Jose, CA

Editor's Note: We are pleased to have heard from many parents with similar stories. For information about DAN!, and information about obtaining audiotapes of the DAN! conference or copies of the DAN! protocol, see article below.

Dietary changes

To the Editor:

I am writing you to share our experience with taking our four-year-old autistic son off gluten and casein (wheat and milk). After one year of following the diet, Charlie was doing so well that we thought we'd just enjoy life, love him, and let go of the diet. To our surprise, after six months, not only did he not progress, but he lost skills he had.

Within one week of putting him back on the diet, he started responding to pain appropriately. He isn't getting stuck on one activity and can now transition easily.

Nancy Kiolbasa
Stillwater, Minnesota

IN MEMORIAM

BETTYE RUTH KAY

FOUNDER, BITTERSWEET FARMS

Bettye Ruth Kay had a tremendous zest for life. Whether she was working on a committee for social justice, walking through the orchard at Bittersweet Farms, or baking a fresh loaf of bread, Bettye Ruth had a passion and commitment for living a life of meaning from the smallest, most mundane detail of life, to the grandest of projects. Bettye Ruth believed in and created programs for individuals with autism which were intrinsically meaningful and full of the same zestfulness that she lived and loved.

I met Bettye Ruth in the spring of 1984. I was awed by the courage, compassion, and passion with which Bettye Ruth tackled every task. Within three months I was a graduate student in special education. Nine years later I completed a PhD with research in the field of autism.

From my work in the homes of preschoolers with autism to the university classroom, Bettye Ruth's belief in the need for meaning in the lives of individuals with autism is at the heart and soul of programs and curricula. Bettye's physical presence is no longer with us, but her own life of courage, passion and meaning is a model for us all.

Joanne M. Cafiero, PhD
The Johns Hopkins University
and Montgomery County Schools

UPDATE: The Defeat Autism Now! (DAN) Project

Our DAN! project, initiated in 1994 as a means of developing truly effective treatments for autism (based primarily on physiology, not pharmacology), has made great strides, as the above letters show.

CONFERENCE:

Mark your calendar! The Third Annual DAN! Conference will take place September 19-21, 1997, in San Diego. World leaders in autism treatment will speak. Write for information.

AUDIOTAPES:

Audiotapes of our June 1996 DAN! Conference in Chicago are available. Speakers: Sidney Baker, M.D., Jon Pangborn, Ph.D., William Shaw, Ph.D., Stephen B. Edelson, M.D., and Sudhir Gupta, M.D., Ph.D. Printed speakers' notes and slides included. \$100, including shipping and handling. (California residents add \$7.50 tax.)

DAN! PROTOCOL:

Clinical manual for physicians, giving detailed information on biomedical diagnostic tests, laboratories, and interpretation. \$25.00 including shipping and handling. (California residents add \$1.88 tax.)

DOCTORS LIST:

Send SASE for a list of physicians who implement the DAN! procedures.