



# Carmichael Connection

## September 2016

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### CARMICHAEL ENTERPRISES RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS LTD

### IN THIS ISSUE

#### HIGHER AUTISM PREVALENCE IN CHILDREN PRENATALLY EXPOSED TO ALCOHOL

Excerpts from: **Marlene Leung**, CTVNews.ca June 22, 2016

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/health/higher-autism-prevalence-in-children-prenatally-exposed-to-alcohol-pilot-study-1.2956199>

A new pilot study found that the prevalence of autism among children prenatally exposed to alcohol was significantly higher than the prevalence in the overall Canadian population.

The study, which will be presented at the Canadian Paediatric Society's annual conference in P.E.I. this week, examined the case reports of 300 Ontario children aged three to 16 who were exposed to alcohol in the womb.

Researchers reviewed the case reports to determine the prevalence of autism, number of children diagnosed with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), and other demographic data.

FASDs are a group of conditions that can present in children whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy, and are among the leading causes of cognitive and developmental disability among Canadian children. FASD symptoms can range from mild to severe, and may include physical, mental, behavioural, and learning disabilities.

The researchers found that 4.7 per cent (or 14) of the 300 children had been diagnosed with autism. By comparison, the prevalence of autism among the general Canadian population is 1.1 per cent.

The study also found the following:

- Of the 14 children who were diagnosed with autism, half were boys and half were girls;
- Two additional children had autistic features, but did not meet the criteria for a formal diagnosis;
- Of these 16 children, all were diagnosed with FASD.

Dr. Brenda Stade, co-author of the study and head of St. Michael's Hospital Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Clinic, told CTVNews.ca that researchers aren't sure what's behind the association between prenatal alcohol exposure and autism.

"Whether alcohol is actually causing autism symptoms, we don't know," she said. "We can only say that there's a correlation, but we don't know exactly why."

Stade noted that there may be some overlap between FASD symptoms and the symptoms associated with autism. However, she said, children diagnosed with autism in the study presented with symptoms of both disorders. She recommends that children who are being screened for FASD should also be screened for autism to ensure they're getting every available intervention.

"We don't want to miss those kids who could benefit from specific interventions developed for autism," she said.



### CHANGE YOUR DESTINY

#### A FEW TIPS

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### STRESS IN PREGNANCY

#### AUTISM CONNECTION

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happy  
birthday  
to you!

## Birthdays - September 2016

Vaughn	Helen
Isabell	Kip
Brayden	Jasmine
Stacey	Pam
Kristine	Chris J
Gabriella	Hope
Greg	Faqiru



## Welcome New Staff & Returns

Richard                  Ronald

### RANDOM FAST FACTS



Porcupines can float water!



The number of possible ways of playing the first four moves per side in a game of chess is 318,979,564,000

### OOPS!

If we have missed anyone off the Staff Spotlights please contact the office so we may correct in the next issue. Thank you!



Change your  
destiny

## Sow a Thought - Change Your Destiny

Excerpts from: IPM Spring Edition <http://www.workplace.ca/newsletter/pdf/pdf1457987584.pdf>

### Changing the way you think delivers results

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." No truer words were ever spoken.

I believe we can change our destiny by changing our thoughts. Not only do I believe this, but I have done it personally and watched countless people do it as well. You are doing it now. Your thoughts are creating the future that is in front of you. Your thoughts are creating actions. Are you thinking about making that important call or all the reasons why you should not make that call? Are you thinking about eating healthy for a more vibrant and longer life or eating something just for the taste or instant gratification? All of our thoughts create actions. That is why it is so important to think about what you are thinking about. Your life can be completely different in a very short period of time by just changing the way you think.

Here are a few tips to help you.

### Surround yourself with people who think in the direction you want to go in life.

Over the past decade of writing and speaking, I have learned to surround myself with people who support me in my quest for the future. Occasionally, someone comes into my life that is combative, unreasonable or focused only on themselves. At first, I wondered how I attracted that type of person into my life. I then realized that they are important — they are markers to show me not only what not to be like, but more importantly to make me truly appreciate the wonderful supporting people who surround me.

### Watch your actions

If you find yourself doing something that you are not too proud of or does not serve you well, stop and rethink it. Ask yourself what thinking led to this action or behaviour. Often we have learned values and behaviours, or maybe even inherited ones that are not serving us well. Do you always have to be right? Do you not compromise? Are you confrontational? In reality, a trait which we think is helping us get ahead may be what is holding us back.

Look at the area of your life where you are very happy. What are your thoughts in that area of your life? What type of habits did you create? What is your character? I believe you will see all the answers you are looking for. You are already changing the way you think at this very moment. You are creating your destiny and your thinking has a huge impact on what it will look like. Remember, you ultimately "Bring About What You Think About".

Eddie Lemoine is an International Speaker and Employee Engagement Expert. Also a recognized author, Eddie's latest book is "Bring About What You Think About". He can be reached via email at [eddie@eddielemoine.com](mailto:eddie@eddielemoine.com).

"Sow a thought, reap an action.  
Sow an action, reap a habit.  
Sow a habit, reap a character.  
Sow a character, reap a destiny."

## HERE ARE FIVE COMMON MYTHS ABOUT AUTISM

Excerpts from: Carmen Chai, Global News

<http://globalnews.ca/news/1918930/world-autism-awareness-day-4-misconceptions-about-autism/>

### **Misconception: Autism is a rarity**

One in 68 children fall under the autism spectrum disorder, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The U.S. federal agency says that's a 30 per cent jump from its last estimate of 1 in 88 children – the latest calculations mean autism is more than twice as common as officials said it was years ago.

It's hard to decipher why cases are on the rise but experts say that it could be because of a raised awareness and doctors who can identify cases better now, especially in children with mild problems.

There are no blood or biological tests for autism. It's diagnosed by making judgments about a child's behaviour.

The CDC says that autism affects 1.2 million U.S. children and teens. U.K. health officials say one in every 100 people is living with autism.

Health Canada points to global statistics – “an average prevalence” of about one per cent – but it's working on a national surveillance system for autism. The first collection of data is expected in 2015 with initial findings to be made available by 2016. Autism affects one out of 42 boys and one in 189 girls, according to estimates.

### **Misconception: People living with autism deal with the same symptoms**

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) includes a group of complex disorders of brain development, according to [Autism Speaks Canada](#). In May 2013, the DSM-5 – dubbed the mental health bible for health care professionals – merged autism disorders into one umbrella diagnosis of ASD.

People with autism are stereotyped as having special abilities, but this isn't across the board. Some statistics suggest that about one in 200 people have special abilities while others peg it at 10 per cent.

Some kids, for example, could excel with exceptional memory, music, or computer skills. Others could have significant impairments with social relationships or communication. Each diagnosis is unique so some people could depend on routine, get agitated by sensory stimulation or they need clear, unambiguous instructions, according to the U.K.'s [NHS](#).

### **Misconception: Parenting, environmental factors trigger autism**

Autism was first described by scientists in the 1940s. Years later, critics pointed a finger at cold parenting – “refrigerator mothers” who were distant and didn't engage with their kids – as the culprit.

While researchers still don't know what causes autism, they're certain parenting isn't a factor. They're zeroing in on genes instead. Studies have suggested that parents who have a first child with autism have higher chances of having a second

child with autism compared to the general population.

Canadian scientists who studied siblings with autism and their parents found that even siblings can have different ‘forms’ of autism. In this case, the siblings and their parents’ genetic code were examined. Mutations present like typos in the human DNA code. While siblings shared autism spectrum disorder and the same parents, the typos in their DNA that led to the neurodevelopmental condition weren't the same.

The researchers learned that in 70 per cent of the cases, different genes were involved in the siblings’ autism. With this information in hand, doctors are hopeful that patients will receive individualized treatment.

### **Misconception: Autism is a mental health disorder**

Autism is a neurological disorder marked by abnormalities in the brain.

While people believe that those with autism lack empathy and can't develop meaningful relationships, they can feel as much, if not more, than their peers, [PBS](#) notes. Children with autism may find it difficult or aren't sought out by others. They could have difficulty relating and building connections with their peers, Autism Canada says.

### **Misconception: Vaccines cause autism**

It's been a tumultuous few years for parents and pediatricians: measles, mumps, whooping cough and chicken pox have all resurfaced in North America after they were virtually wiped out with the help of vaccines.

Infection disease experts suggest a steadily growing anti-vaccination movement is what's causing this resurgence.

In 1998, a study raised concerns about a possible link between the MMR – measles, mumps, and rubella – vaccine and autism, setting off widespread panic around the world. The study had its flaws: it was based on only 12 children, and the researchers didn't find a link between the MMR vaccine and behavioural problems. Ten of the 13 authors of the paper said they shouldn't have published the paper.

Ultimately, the journal that published the paper issued a formal retraction. It said that its decision to publish the article was the result of a “[collective failure](#).” Subsequent large studies around the world haven't found a link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

“There is no scientific evidence to support the theory of a link. Because signs of autism may appear around the same age that children receive the MMR vaccine, some parents believe the vaccine causes the condition,” the [Canadian Paediatric Society](#) says on its website.

## UP COMING EVENTS



### World FASD Day

September 9, 2016

<http://isfglobal.org/international-self-care-day/>



### CARF Canada

Achieving and Maintaining CARF Accreditation in Employment & Community Services, Behavioural Health, and Child & Youth Services

September 19-20, 2016  
Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre  
515 West Hastings Street  
Room 7000, Vancouver, BC

<http://www.cvent.com/events/achieving-and-maintaining-carf-accreditation-in-employment-and-community-services-behavioural-health/event-summary-15fd3ae6bd8c4a55846d76721cad18d2.aspx>



### World Heart Day

September 29, 2016

## STRESS IN PREGNANCY AND AUTISM: NEW GENE-STRESS INTERACTION UNCOVERED

Excerpts from: [Marie Ellis Medical News Today www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/310828.php](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/310828.php)



Stress has been implicated in a number of health risks, but pregnant women, in particular, are cautioned that stress is linked to several conditions that could affect their offspring. Now, researchers have identified a variant of a gene that is sensitive to stress, which they observed in two groups of mothers of children with autism.

The new study, led by Dr. David Beversdorf of the University of Missouri (MU) in Columbia, is published in the journal *Autism Research*. **Autism** spectrum disorder (ASD) includes many conditions that were previously diagnosed separately. These include autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified, and Asperger syndrome.

ASD is a developmental disability that causes social, communication, and behavioral challenges; individuals with ASD have learning, thinking, and problem-solving abilities that range from gifted to challenged.

In the United States, about **1 in 68 children** have been diagnosed with ASD, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Although it occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups, ASD is about 4.5 times more common in boys than girls.

Dr. Beversdorf explains that although autism was previously seen as a genetic disorder, recent research has implicated environmental influences - including **stress** - in the development of the condition.

"We know that some mothers who experience significant levels of stress don't have children with autism, but others do," he says. "To help understand why, we studied a gene that is known to affect stress and found a link between it and the development of autism with exposure to stress."

### Findings are significant, but more research is needed

To conduct their study, the researchers looked at two groups of mothers of children with ASD: a group of families at MU and a group of families at Queens University in Ontario, Canada, where researchers collaborated with the MU team.

The investigators surveyed the mothers about stress during their pregnancy, including loss of a job, divorce, or moving. They then tested their blood for a variation of the stress-sensitive gene called 5-HTTLPR.

This gene regulates **serotonin** in the nervous system, but when a variation of the gene exists, it increases the body's reaction to stress, say the researchers.

**Results show that both groups of mothers with children with autism who have the variation of 5-HTTLPR reported encountering more stress during pregnancy, compared with mothers who did not carry the variant.**

*"Though this was an observational study and future confirmation of this finding is needed, it's possible we could, one day, identify women who may be at a greater risk of having a child with autism when exposed to stress."*

*Dr. David Beversdorf*

Carmichael  
Connection

Serving Nanaimo to Campbell River

Randi's Place ~ Wellington Place ~ Oceanside Place ~ Creekside Place ~ Shamrock Home ~ Hammond Place ~ Uplands Home ~ Harbourview Place ~ Matt & Dan's Home ~ Buckley Bay Home ~ Bronte's Home ~ Outreach Home ~ Lost Lake Home