
From: Blaxill Mark
To: Mike Williams
CC: Sallie Bernard; tlredwood@mindspring.com
Sent: 11/23/2003 6:45:05 PM
Subject: RE: Autism & the Environment: Exploring a Connection A free educational forum
Attachments: autism.epi.review.doc; epi.review.charts.ppt; autism.environment.presentation.final.zip

Mike,
Here are the slides I gave at the autism-environment forum. They are pretty similar to what you saw at Mealey, only mildly updated and solely focused on the increases not on Hg. I'll also send you (in case I didn't earlier) a copy of the epi review I've submitted to Public Health Reports.

As to the Geiers, I may be a bit of a minority voice here, but I worry very much that they can do our cause more harm than good. They are not very good scientists, write bad papers (both writing badly and reporting in sloppy fashion) and attract too much attention to themselves as individuals. In this last regard, they don't show nearly as well as Andy Wakefield but they're trying to play the same role. Frankly, if I were on the other side and were asked to critique their work, I could rip it to shreds. I'm surprised they haven't been hit harder. So I think you are wise to diversify.

Mark

-----Original Message-----

From: Mike Williams [mailto:michael_williams@wdolaw.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2003 4:18 PM
To: blaxill.mark@bcg.com
Cc: Sallie Bernard; tlredwood@mindspring.com
Subject: Autism & the Environment: Exploring a Connection A free educational forum

Mark, I hope you will send me a copy of any papers or slides presented at this conference, or any handouts. I am sorry not to be able to come listen.

We had a long phone conference today among our lead attorneys and put together a detailed plan to critique the published "negative" studies (Stehr-Green; Hviid; Verstraeten (though Verstraeten is actually a positive study, even in its published summary form); to validate Geiers' 3 published VAERS studies and to validate if we can their VSD study (yet unpublished but submitted); to evaluate all of your critiques of the negative studies and validate your analyses, and to evaluate the authors' responses to your critiques; and to look for ways we could query the VSD ourselves for valid associations. We have a long list of new potential epidemiological experts, most without ties to CDC, and we are in the process of contacting them.

We have decided we cannot use our resources now to fund any more research by the Geiers. WE must expend our resources on the existing studies, including theirs, and especially validate theirs, before we sink tens of thousands of more dollars into their work.

Unfortunately, Mark Geier is a geneticist, not an epidemiologist and not much of a statistician at all. His son David has only a BA in English. Even if they are right, they are on the verge of not being qualified enough to say so. I love them both, and they have done indispensable good science to help thousands of kids, but we have to get specially highly qualified academic types to back them up. We welcome any suggestions of other avenues of analysis to explore, or other experts to contact. We have followed up on every name any of you have given us to date, I think.

Yours truly, Mike Williams

Autism & the Environment: Exploring a Connection
A free educational forum

Please join The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow
November 20, 2003 7:15-9:15pm

PSC/WP-00025421

University of Massachusetts
Hoagland-Pincus Conference Center
222 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Mass. (Directions below)

Learn
How environmental chemicals may alter brain functions and brain growth. How exposure to environmental toxins can influence the neurological health and development of children. The possible interaction between known genetic links and environmental factors that may contribute to the lifelong developmental disorder of autism.

Speakers include
Richard Deth, PhD, Professor of Pharmacology at Northeastern University
Martha Herbert, PhD, MD, Mass. General Hospital
Mark Blaxill, Director of Safe Minds
Joel Tickner, ScD, Lowell Center for Sustainable Production

Sponsored by
The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow, The Autism Resource Center, Autism Community Resources, Autism Society of America (Mass. chapter), the Leominster Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production. For more information

Contact Tracy Carlson (401) 331-6972 or tcarlson@cleanwater.org
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Thank you.