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**The First Study Ever to Document Recovery in a Large Group of Children with Autism
is Conducted by the Center for Autism and Related Disorders**

Los Angeles, CA – September 21, 2009 A study by the Center for Autism and Related Disorders, Inc. (CARD), found that some children with autism who receive early intensive behavioral intervention recover from the disorder, achieving functioning levels that are indistinguishable from typically developing peers.

In *Retrospective analysis of clinical records in 38 cases of recovery from autism*, published in the August 2009 edition of the *Annals of Clinical Psychiatry*, CARD researchers Doreen Granpeesheh, PhD, BCBA-D, Jonathan Tarbox, PhD, BCBA-D, Dennis R. Dixon, PhD, and collaborators Edward Carr, PhD, and Martha Herbert, MD, PhD, summarized the outcomes of children with autism who achieved IQ scores in the average range, significant increases in adaptive skills, and later lost their Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis.

Study participants' average age at intake was 3 years, 4 months, and each received intensive behavioral intervention from CARD for a minimum of 12 months. Average IQ was 83.6 at intake and 107.9 at discharge. Average adaptive skills were 68.04 at intake and 88.87 at discharge. Senior clinical staff involved with the treatment of the research participants also reported that the children achieved age-appropriate functioning in school and other areas, and no longer required support of any kind after discharge.

"Children have been recovering from autism through ABA treatment for decades now but this is the first study to document it in a relatively large group of children," says Tarbox. "Several of the participants in this study are actually in college right now, just doing what college kids do. It's really amazing to see. Many people in mainstream society are unaware that recovery from autism exists and many still try to deny it. But the fact of the matter is that recovery exists and people working in top-quality ABA programs have seen it for years. This study is just the first step in a line of research we are doing that will further document recovery, identify variables that support and prevent it, as well as improving the effectiveness of ABA treatment so that a greater percentage of children can recover."

“It’s important to keep in mind that this study was just a retrospective review of whatever data were already present in the charts of clients who achieved recovery, so we were very limited as far as what data we could get.

For our current and future research projects related to recovery, our definition of recovery is the most rigorous that has been proposed in the field and includes:

1. Loss of eligibility for an ASD diagnosis according to the DSM and the ADOS
2. Score in the average or above-average range (one standard deviation below the mean or higher) on standardized tests of intelligence, language, socialization and generalized adaptive functioning
3. Achieve passing grades in a regular education placement, without specialized support of any kind

“While full recovery may not be achievable for every child, all children with autism can learn skills that will increase their independence and improve their quality of life. There is currently no way to predict at the beginning of a child’s ABA program whether or not he will recover but we believe every child with autism deserves to have a shot at it,” said Tarbox.

Questions regarding this study should be directed to Dr. Jonathan Tarbox, CARD Director of Research at j.tarbox@centerforautism.com or 818.345.2345.

About the Center for Autism and Related Disorders, Inc. (CARD):

CARD is committed to science as the most objective and reliable approach to evaluating treatment for autism. CARD’s mission is to conduct empirical research on the assessment and treatment of autism and to disseminate CARD’s research findings and derived technology through publication and education of professionals and the public. While the primary focus of CARD’s research is ABA-based methods of assessment and treatment, CARD’s overall approach to research includes any topic which may hold promise for producing information that could improve the lives of individuals with autism. In addition, CARD maintains a reputation as one of the world’s largest and most experienced organizations effectively treating children with autism, Asperger’s Syndrome, PDD-NOS, and related disorders. Following the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), CARD develops individualized treatment plans for children worldwide. For more information about CARD, visit www.centerforautism.com .

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