



2008 Accomplishments

Talk About Curing Autism (TACA) provides real help for children with autism and their families. We educate, empower, support and connect families with the resources they need to secure the best possible outcome for their children.

Below are our key accomplishments from 2008:

1. TACA was founded in November 2000 in Orange County, California with 10 families meeting in the Ackerman living room. In June 2008 TACA moved into its office headquarters in Costa Mesa, California to provide support throughout the nation to families reaching out for help. **In 2008 the number of families TACA serves has more than doubled – from 6,500 to almost 14,000.**
2. TACA continues to provide 95% of program services at no cost to families. Information on TACA programs and mission can be found at www.tacanow.org.
3. TACA launched new chapters in California, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.
4. TACA coordinators handled more than 1,000 phone calls and more than 4,000 e-mails from families across the country looking for support.
5. TACA doubled the number of educational meetings across the country from 100 in 2007 to more almost 200 in 2008. These meetings were held in 17 locations across the country.
6. Distributed 4,250 free Autism Journey Guides to families at TACA meetings. More than a quarter million “My Child Has Autism Cards” were also distributed.
7. TACA held our 6th Annual one day Medical Conference featuring Dr. Jerry Kartzinel and Dr. Dan Rossignol.
8. TACA was prominently featured in a front page *Orange County Register* article. More than 50 media reports featured TACA in 2008. TACA representatives were also interviewed on a variety of local and national news programs on a variety of topics.
9. TACA published two printed newsletters distributed to more than 30,000 people.

10. TACA participated as a partner in the Autism Collaboration, a group of organizations that have joined to coordinate parent-driven research and other efforts in a united effort – www.autism.org.
11. For the first time in TACA's history, we sponsored \$45,000 in research through the Autism Collaboration parents as partners in research program which is focused on finding treatment options for families.
12. In addition to our national Yahoo! Group, TACA expanded its online services to include a Facebook cause with more than 5,000 members, and Live Chat feature on the TACA website for families looking for help.
13. TACA added a new board member, Pat McIlvain. Pat is the Vice President of Sports Marketing for Oakley, Inc. In his present role, Pat is responsible for all athlete endorsement, event sponsorships and brand engagement within all sports globally. Pat has a 9-year-old son with autism.
14. TACA provided almost 200 mentor introductions for new families to obtain support and guidance from an experienced TACA family. TACA also held seven new parent seminars across the country. TACA mentors attended national conferences and were available to the more than 9,000 attendees to provide one-on-one support.
15. Hosted the Second Annual TACA Leadership Conference where 60 key TACA staff were trained and updated on best practices for serving families
16. Through its partnership in AutismCares, TACA provided financial assistance to 35 families in crisis to help with emergency needs and to 95 families who were victims of Hurricanes Ike and Gustav. Fourteen additional families were provided with treatment scholarships to assist with medical care for their children.
17. This holiday season TACA adopted 75 families from across the U.S. We were helped by Northrop Grumman, National Charity League and more than a dozen volunteers and staff members who helped us shop, pack and ship (with the generosity of Kirkman Labs) to more than 400 people a holiday package of cheer, grocery gift cards and a small gift for the children.
18. TACA was one of four autism organizations that orchestrated the largest autism and vaccine rally, Green Our Vaccines, in the country. More than 8,000 people marched in Washington, D.C. TACA secured support and attendance from 50 autism and child-related non-profit agencies.
19. TACA Parent Support and Media Relations Manager, Rebecca Estepp, attended the Omnibus Vaccine Court Hearings in Washington, DC and provided specific support for military families living with autism.

20. TACA is a founding sponsor of the Age of Autism web site, the nation's first daily Web newspaper for the environmental-biomedical community.
21. TACA increased fundraising efforts by more than 35% in 2008, from 2007, with diverse funding sources that can be replicated annually.
22. TACA was the beneficiary of 30 special events – two were hosted by TACA, and the remainder were developed and managed by others in the autism community.
23. Received a \$300,000 grant from Pacific Life Foundation to begin three new programs for families in 2009. TACA was also awarded \$50,000 from Buchanan Street Children's charities through a matching grant that was supported by The Mill and the Orange County Community Foundation.
24. Continued relationship with Jack FM radio that resulted in frequent radio spots featuring Lisa Ackerman on autism and TACA. Jack's Third Show - a concert benefiting TACA - that raised \$50,000.
25. TACA 6th annual family picnic was our largest ever, with more than 1,900 in attendance and more than \$110,000 raised.
26. Held the second annual Ante Up for Autism gala and poker tournament in Newport Beach, California, hosted by Lance Armstrong and Jenny McCarthy. This spectacular evening raised more than \$300,000 with 400 people in attendance.
27. Sponsored our first Law Day to educate parents about their child's legal rights. This event was attended by more than 300 parents.
28. Our website, tacanow.org, received almost 900,000 visits with more than 5.5 million pages of support and information provided to users.
29. The first TACA e-newsletter was sent in January 2002. In 2008 we more than doubled the subscribers, bringing the total distribution list to more than 15,000 autism parents and professionals.
30. Almost 250 additional books were added to libraries in TACA locations for families to utilize at no cost.
31. TACA held three marriage and family counseling groups in Orange County and Los Angeles with each including 10 people over 8 weeks. In a post-group survey participant's consistently felt that attending the group improved their marital relationships.

For additional information please contact TACA at:
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