

# weap: The People

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Wisconsin Early Autism Project, Inc.

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## An Apple a Day...

By Justin Sallows

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For months we have heard how the iPad from Apple Computer would revolutionize the industry. It would change the way people organize and store information. It would become a common sight on buses and in libraries and infuse itself in every aspect of our lives.

I don't know if any of that is true, but it is proving to be a valuable asset for families. Both the iPad and iPod touch have been purchased for each WEAP clinic. They have been loaded up with many programs for matching, word association and other helpful apps.

The most notable of these is "Proloquo2Go". Proloquo2Go™ is a new product from AssistiveWare that provides a full-featured communication solution for people who have difficulty speaking. It brings natural sounding text-to-speech voices, up-to-date symbols, powerful automatic conjugations, a default vocabulary of over 7000

*continued on page 2*

## The Sporting Edge

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Engaging others can be challenging for a child with autism and verbal communication can be frustrating at times. Physical activity, particularly something with rules and a goal can help bridge that gap as well as provide a sense of structure and accomplishment.

For many children with autism, the fast pace, group format and motor coordination requirements of team sports can be daunting. Difficulties with sustained attention and rapid attention shifts compound the challenge. Using strategies to prepare your child for sports can increase their success rate. For example, pre-teaching the required motor skills, vocabulary for the game, rules, modeling through video, replicating the possible distractions during practice sessions may be good tactics for ensuring success. For those whose attention difficulties, reduced frustration tolerance, or lack of competitive spirit are too pronounced for success within a team, there are still options for sports activities.

Some individuals find success with individualized sports or activities. Although they will receive coaching from an instructor, there are no demands placed on them by team members as there are on team sports. There are fewer distractions and they have their own individual goals to meet instead of trying to match up to the goals of an entire team.

Many children with autism find swimming very enjoyable. Even being on a swim team is ok because they are in their own lane focusing on their own experience. They don't have to worry about what anyone else is doing and don't have to respond to verbal or non-verbal cues normally associated with team sports.

*continued on page 2*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 An Apple a Day...
- 1 The Sporting Edge
- 3 Ivar Lovaas, You Will Be Missed
- 4 Upcoming Events - Groups & Classes - Current Openings

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Line Therapist Samantha Miller out of our Milwaukee office has been recognized for "Always displaying a positive attitude during shifts and team meetings." Her Senior Therapist Melissa Jung continues "She always has good play strategies. Samantha is a team player and always willing to help when she can."

items, full expandability and extreme ease of use.

This program makes the iPod touch and iPad a Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device much like the popular Dynavox system.

Children who are nonverbal can benefit from the use of AAC at a very young age. An AAC or speech generating device (SGD) are communication resources that allows a person to select symbols, pictures, letters, words or phrases to generate oral communication. Some people develop the ability to use natural speech through using a device.

Some pros of the Apple devices are that they are mainstream and socially relevant and can be age-appropriate for older kids/adults. The programs are easy to program and you can add other apps. They are lighter weight than other devices which makes them a lot more portable. They are fully customizable and easy to program. They have natural sounding voices with multiple voices available.

In addition to the speech-generating application, iPad and iPod devices provide adolescents with autism an additional means of connecting with their peers. Easy access to social networking applications, photos, music and games provide simple and effective options for sharing experiences.

Delayed executive functioning skills suggest many with autism spectrum disorders would also benefit from personalized visual schedules, reminders for assignments, and time management aids. Self-management skills such as setting goals, monitoring and evaluating behavior can also be made simpler through a small, mobile device that fits in your pocket.

But there are some cons as well. The content and language are not as rich as found in other devices. The speakers are not very loud. You can get better speakers which come with a case. This makes it somewhat larger but still much smaller than a Dynavox. They require good fine motor skills and light touch which may be difficult for some users. The content amounts to common words, but you can add more. These devices are more prone to damage and are more likely to be stolen if left unattended.

Although much cheaper than Dynavox (\$8,000), insurance does not cover the cost of an iPad (\$500) or iPod Touch (\$229) as it does other established devices. Dynavox is covered 100% by MA and 80% by Medicare and therefore the Apple devices with the apps may actually be more expensive for the family.

The Apple products at our clinics will be used to determine which of our clients will benefit from them. It will be up to parents to purchase these items,

though they may be able to get some assistance through family grant programs such as those operated by Friends of Autism or The Angel Network. Some counties are also buying Apple devices to help families purchase one.

If you are interested in testing one of these devices to see if it will fit in with your family, ask your Senior Therapist to check one out at your local clinic. Please be aware that these devices must stay in your therapist's possession.♦

For more information about Proloquo2Go, go to <http://www.proloquo2go.com/>

SPORTS continued from page 1

Swimming allows for some socialization, particularly if they are involved in a club, team or group of friends.

For many of the same reasons, track and field is also a popular choice. It involves focusing on limited stimuli and doesn't require a lot of external interaction or social cues. This helps prevent feelings of being overwhelmed or confused.

Many parents have discovered that karate classes can also do lots of good. It's not quite a team sport, but it has many of the benefits of one: a group working together, yet individually. Kids have the opportunity to observe what others are doing and try to imitate the movement. Silence is stressed in karate classes unless there is a question so there's not a lot of horseplay or other distractions. Many children with autism are able to adapt to this structure relatively well.

Most schools will allow at least one free class to get a feel for what it is like before making a commitment. There might even be classes that have another child or two on the spectrum.

Along similar lines, group instructional activities such as tumbling, dancing or exercise classes can provide the same structure and sense of achievement.

Sports provide exercise as well as opportunities for social interaction and an interest children can pursue. It gives them something to share with their friends and achievements they can be proud of.♦



## Ivar Lovaas, You Will Be Missed



**Los Angeles, CA, August 6, 2010** – O. Ivar Lovaas, a distinguished professor of psychology at UCLA, a pioneer in the research and development of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy to treat children with autism, and the founder of the Lovaas Institute, died on August 2nd at age 83.

The publication of Dr. Lovaas's landmark study in 1987 demonstrated that nearly half the children with autism who received early, intensive behavioral therapy achieved normal-range IQ scores and were able to attend regular education classrooms by the end of first grade without the help of an aide. Many of the children in the study who did not achieve optimal results still demonstrated marked improvement. This study paved the way for the development of practical, effective therapy based on objective, measurable data, in contrast to earlier treatments which had been based on theories unsupported by scientific research. Since that time, his work has been validated by independent treatment sites which achieved comparable outcomes when trained in his methods. WEAP was one such site and the first to publish results supporting Lovaas' earlier work.

In the late 1950's, as he was completing his post-doctoral work at the Child Development Institute (CDI) at University of Washington with fellow students Sid Bijou and Don Baer, Dr. Lovaas made the observation that,

*"All the children appeared happy and normal except for a little girl who did not make eye contact, did not talk or play with toys, spending the day rocking her body and*

*flapping her hands and behaved as if others were not present. I feared that she would not get better with the psychological treatments provided at that time, but instead would end up in a state hospital where she would remain until she died. She had many of the behaviors, which would indicate autism, but the diagnosis was not reliable that far back."*

This began his search for effective treatments for autism, which could best be determined by rigorous research. The treatment he developed focused on observed behaviors rather than underlying neurosis and emphasized environmental consequences, and especially the use of reinforcement, to teach new, more appropriate behaviors. In 1961, Dr. Lovaas joined the UCLA psychology department and used his early research and success at the CDI to formulate a comprehensive therapeutic and educational approach to treatment which grew into the Lovaas Model of Applied Behavior Analysis.

Dr. Lovaas devoted his career of nearly fifty years to improving the lives of children with autism. He founded the Lovaas Institute in 1995 to serve the rapidly expanding demand for treatment which arose from his research clinic at UCLA. Dr. Lovaas was the president and clinical director of the Institute, which continues to provide treatment to children with autism and consultation to school districts attempting to cope with the increasing need for effective special education for children on the autism spectrum. In recent years, Dr. Lovaas assumed an advisory role at the Institute, which now provides services across the country, with offices on both coasts and the Midwest and with affiliates in several countries abroad.

When interviewed several years ago about how he would like to be remembered, Dr. Lovaas said,

*"I would like to be remembered in the tradition of other empiricists and educators who put a good deal of faith in the power of the environment to shape human behavior. I'd like to be remembered as one who worked to free those whose minds enslaved them...and as a person who challenged the notion that variables that we used to consider to be stable and unchanging, like IQ and autism, aren't really as unchanging as many had thought them to be."*

Dr. Lovaas was born in 1927 in Lier, Norway, a small agricultural village outside of Oslo. His father was a journalist at the local newspaper and his mother was the daughter of a tenant farmer. Dr. Lovaas is survived by his wife, Nina, and his four children, daughters Randi, Lisa, and Kari, and son, Erik, who follows his father's methods in his own clinic in Nevada.♦

A memorial service will be held in the coming weeks. A memorial scholarship fund is also in development. More details will be posted on the Lovaas Institute website: [www.lovaas.com](http://www.lovaas.com). To inquire further or to contribute a special message, please e-mail [memorial@Lovaas.com](mailto:memorial@Lovaas.com)

# Upcoming Events

## Puberty Workshops

The Autism Society of Southeastern Wisconsin is once again cosponsoring puberty workshops for boys and girls at Children's Hospital. The Girl's workshop is full. There is still room in the workshop for boys.

**Saturday, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**from 9:30 to 11:30 am**  
**\$30**  
 Terrie Couwenhoven  
[tcouwen@execpc.com](mailto:tcouwen@execpc.com)  
 262-284-5043.

## Assessment & Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Birth 5 Population

By Jessica Emick, PhD The goal of this program is to provide a comprehensive model for ASD assessment for the birth to five population that result in increased diagnostic accuracy & appropriate research-based interventions.

**Sep 29**  
**Pewaukee**  
 8a 3:30p  
 \$179  
 Pre-registration Country Springs Hotel 2810 Golf Rd.  
 Lori Manning  
[www.health-ed.com](http://www.health-ed.com)  
[lmanning@health-ed.com](mailto:lmanning@health-ed.com)  
 800-839-4584

## Groups and Classes

Location	Group	Age/Level	Facilitator	Fee	Days	Time	Start Date
Madison	Teen Group	Ages 13-16	Matt S	\$30/class (register by Sept. 16th)	Wednesdays	4:00-5:30PM	Sept. 15th- Dec. 15th
Madison	Social Skills: Elephant Parade	Ages 10-12	Katie K.	\$30/class (register by Sept. 16th)	Tuesdays	3:30-5:00PM	Sept. 14th- Dec. 14th
Madison	Sibling Group	All Ages	Kim W.	\$50/class (register by Sept. 16th)	Wednesdays	3:00-4:30PM	Sept. 15 th- Dec. 1st
Madison	Speech Adventurers	Ages 4-6	Amy S	\$50/class (register by Sept. 16th)	Wednesdays	1:00-2:30PM	Sept. 15th- Dec. 1st
Milwaukee	Monday Night Kids' Group	Ages 8-12	Robin	\$30/class Cost includes outings	Mondays	4:30PM-6:00PM	Sept. 20th- Nov.22nd
Milwaukee	Friendship Club	Ages 11-14	Stephanie	\$30/class Cost includes outings	Thursdays <small>(no group 10/28, 11/25)</small>	4:30-6:00PM	Sept. 23rd – Dec. 9th
Milwaukee	Social Language	Ages 5-7	Stephanie	\$30/class	Tuesdays <small>(no group 05/18)</small>	4:30-6:00PM	Sept. 14th- Oct. 12th
Milwaukee	WEAP's Got Talent	Ages 7-11	Stephanie	\$30/class	Tuesdays	4:30-6:00PM	Nov. 23rd- Dec. 14th
Milwaukee	Bully Free Group 2	Ages 8-10	Stephanie	\$30/week	Tuesdays	4:30-6:00PM	Oct. 19th- Nov. 16th
Green Bay	Social Skills	3-5 yrs	TBA	\$10/class Choose number of classes ( Register by Sept 20th )	Mondays	4:30-6:00pm	Sept 27 - Nov 15
Green Bay	Social skills	6-9 yrs	TBA	\$10/class Choose number of classes ( Register by Sept 20th )	Tuesdays	4:30-6:00pm	Sept 28 - Nov 16
Green Bay	Teen Group	10-13 yrs	TBA	\$10/class Choose number of classes ( Register by Sept 20th )	Thursdays	4:30-6:00pm	Sept 30 - Nov 18
Green Bay	Teen Group	14 yrs & up	TBA	\$10/class Choose number of classes ( Register by Sept 20th )	Wednesdays	4:30-6:00pm	Sept 29 - Nov 17

## Current Openings

<b>MADISON</b> <b>608-288-9040</b> Blanchardville Brooklyn Cottage Grove DeForest Janesville Lake Mills Madison Stoughton Watertown	<b>MILWAUKEE</b> <b>262-432-5660</b> Bayview Bristol Brookfield Brown Deer Burlington Caledonia Cedarburg Delavan Elkhorn Germantown Greendale Greenfield Ixonia Juneau Kenosha Menomonee Falls Milwaukee Mukwonago	Muskego New Berlin Oa Creek Racine S. Milwaukee Sussex Waukesha Wauwatosa West Allis West Bend	<b>GREEN BAY</b> <b>920-338-1610</b> Florence Valders Fox Cities Green Bay Chilton	<b>EAU CLAIRE</b> <b>715-832-2233</b> Brantwood Catawba Chippewa Falls Colfax Danbury Eau Claire Glenwood City	Hazelhurst Hudson Mauston Merrill Phillips Plover Stevens Point Tomah Wausau
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