

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **MOTHER OF CHILD WITH AUTISM CREATES BREAKTHROUGH INTERACTIVE CD-ROM** *To Teach Parents and Professionals How To Elicit Communication in Children with Autism*

Holbrook, NY – Autism, a topic that has been getting a lot of press attention recently, is a word that Sharon Sexton-Braun is all too familiar with. When her son was first diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder at the age of three, she was devastated. After years of research and educating herself on the subject, she has created “Operation Communication,” the first in a series of CD-ROMs designed to educate parents and professionals on how to teach children on the Spectrum in the natural environment.

In the years following her son's diagnosis, Braun wondered “Is my son going to speak? Will he ever be self-sufficient?” Consequently, she spent countless hours reading everything she could about Autism Spectrum Disorders.

“I felt the more I knew about Autism, the better I could advocate for my son,” said Braun. “It was important for me to get out there and help as many people as I could. I want to share some of what I have learned with those new parents whose children have just recently been diagnosed, as well as with the professionals who work with these children.”

The CD-ROM entitled “Operation Communication,” an easy-to-navigate piece of software, gives parents and professionals straightforward examples of how they can help the children they work with communicate in commonplace, everyday situations.

“I chose to use the CD-ROM as a medium because it's interactive and multi-sensory,” said Braun. “Instead of reading a book, you can simply *listen* to the presentation, *read* the summary of text and be *visually* stimulated by the corresponding pictures, all at the same time.”

Using principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Braun candidly explains, with examples, how to elicit functional, purposeful communication with children on the Autistic Spectrum. Designed to be an information resource for parents, grandparents, professionals, and paraprofessionals alike, “Operation Communication” teaches how to use what *motivates* the child in his or her natural environment to stimulate the child to speak. Braun also targets the language areas that these children have the most trouble grasping.

“I wanted to sort of demystify ABA for parents and professionals, and provide them with concrete examples of how they can teach children with Autism language,” explained Braun. “The CD-ROM gives parents and professionals the tools they need without making it too confusing. It also simplifies ABA for unfamiliar parents and explains it in a way that is simple and straightforward.

Because “Operation Communication” is presented by Braun herself, a parent/professional who has a child with an ASD, her enthusiasm for educating others on this topic is unmistakable throughout the CD-ROM.

“I have never been more passionate about anything in my life,” said Braun.

Visit [www.autismedu.com](http://www.autismedu.com) to learn more about Sharon Sexton-Braun and her new interactive CD-ROM entitled: “Operation Communication – Strategies that Facilitate Communication in the Natural Environment for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.”

### **About Sharon Sexton-Braun**

Sharon Sexton-Braun is a mother of two boys, ages nine and four. She received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from SUNY Stony Brook and a Masters of Science in Special Education from Dowling College. In addition, she has completed a three-course graduate level certificate program in Autism given by V. Mark Durand, Ph.D. at the University of Albany. She works part-time with her husband as the CFO of their company, Lounge Lizard Worldwide, Inc., a Long Island, NY-based advertising and design firm. Braun also works part-time as a special education teacher with young children with Autism, ages 3-6, through LIDC, Inc. She is currently in the process of applying to become a BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst). “Operation Communication” has been accepted for distribution by [www.autismtoday.com](http://www.autismtoday.com) and Product Development Associates ([www.disabilitytraining.com](http://www.disabilitytraining.com)).

### **About Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Currently, one in 166 children is being diagnosed with Autism, according to the Autism Society of America (ASA). Autism is a developmental disability that is typically diagnosed within the first three years of life and impacts the child's ability to communicate and to relate socially. As said by the ASA, it is the fastest growing developmental disability and has increased by 172% during the 1990s. It is estimated that in ten years, the annual cost to take care of these individuals will skyrocket to between \$200-400 billion. According to the ASA, however, proper diagnosis and early intervention can reduce the lifelong cost to support these individuals by two-thirds.

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