



## **New Autism Program has Renowned Brain Researcher Speak at Kids On The Move**

**OREM, Utah-Sept. 26, 2011-** Erin Bigler, professor of psychology and neuroscience at Brigham Young University, will share his latest findings on brain abnormalities in individuals with autism on Oct. 5. The new autism program, Bridges, does not just help children with autism but seeks to help educate parents too.

“This program is for children who are over age three who either have autism or other significant developmental delays,” said Eileen Chamberland, executive director at Kids On The Move. This program offers a variety of programs so parents are able to specialize what program their child needs.

According to Bigler the issue with autism is its heterogeneous, meaning each child’s autism is different. There are multiple ways autism is expressed and every child has different problems and strengths. This is one of the issues Bigler and the rest of the University of Utah Autism Clinic are seeking to discover through their research.

Kids On The Move is trying to use this research and knowledge to help in the treatment of these children.

“Some parents aren’t sure what to do for their child,” said Laurie Brown, Bridges program director. “They are not sure what services are out there or they still feel there is need for more, and that is where we come in. We have a strong desire to help and to make every difference we can in these lives.”

Part of the Bridges program is to provide parent university classes, where parents can go to learn more about autism.

“From my standpoint educating yourself is the first stage to helping you treat a disorder,” Bigler said. “Our research is cutting edge. I will be sharing my views of things we are doing right now not old rehashed data.”

Treatment is key to helping these children’s needs. The Bridges program is not part of a state or federal program, so there is no limiting eligibility criterion. Services are on a fee-for-service basis, but Kids On The Move tries to keep services affordable for families. According to the New York Times’ Tara Parker-Pope and a study by the Harvard School of Public Health, “Direct medical and nonmedical costs can add up to as much as \$72,000 a year for someone with an extreme case of the disorder, and even \$67,000 a year for those on the lower end of the spectrum.” The Bridges program is substantially less expensive.

“This is a great milestone for any non-profit agency,” Chamberland said about Kids On The Move’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. “Especially one that was initiated by parents on a shoestring budget serving a handful of families.”

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