

**Education Groups for Parents of Children with ASD:
Helping Parents Differentiate Between Evidence-Based
and Unsubstantiated Interventions**



Araksia Kaladjian, M.A.

UC Riverside SEARCH Family Autism Resource Center Fellow
The Help Group Summit
October 2, 2009

Why?

- Field of ASD has been vulnerable to many false beliefs, spurious treatments and unvalidated interventions
- Parents often make decisions about their child's interventions on the basis of limited information
- Parents have difficulties gathering information about treatment options and then obtaining, monitoring and maintaining services

– (Johnson & Hastings, 2002; National Research Council, 2001; Romanczyk & Gillis, 2005; Rogers & Vismara, 2008; Schreibman, 2005; Simpson et al., 2007)

What?

- Manualized education program
 - assist parents in understanding, selecting and evaluating effective teaching methods
 - help parents become better consumers of scientifically verified treatments
 - teach parents about the components of evidence-based interventions

How?

- Parents recruited through SEARCH and The Help Group Young Learners Preschool
 - Have a child with ASD between the ages of 2 ½ and 5 years
- Four 90 minute weekly sessions
- Delayed-treatment design
- Process and outcome measures
- Three month follow-up assessment

Preliminary Findings

- Parents demonstrate:
 - good attendance and involvement
 - increased knowledge of evidence-based interventions
 - improvements in their parenting sense of competence
 - greater sense of empowerment
- Parents report high satisfaction
- Gains are maintained after a 3-month follow-up
