

# THE *Current*

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## **Autism Conference at UCSB to Focus on Intervention and Treatment**

Hundreds of autism experts from around the world will gather at UC Santa Barbara Sept. 18 and 19 for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual International Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) Conference for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Sponsored by UCSB's Koegel Autism Center, the two-day conference at Corwin Pavilion features scholars, educators, health care professionals, parents, and even grandparents discussing innovative, naturalistic intervention strategies for ASD.

Among the topics to be covered are the history, development and characteristics of ASD; PRT motivational procedures for teaching beginning verbal communication; facilitating social interactions with typically developing peers; teaching social conversation skills; self-management; functional behavior assessment; and motivational academics.

Keynote speakers will be Robert Koegel and Lynn Kern Koegel, director and clinical director, respectively, of the Koegel Autism Center.

"Our annual PRT conference attracts hundreds of people from all over the world," said Lynn Koegel, who is also director of the campus's Broad Asperger Center. "The rate of autism is now 1 in 68, a 30 percent increase from just a few years ago, so there is an enormous need for training parents and professionals. Participants can learn effective 'hands-on' strategies they can implement immediately after

attending the conference. PRT is an effective, evidence-based intervention that produces incredibly rapid gains.”

Developed at UCSB, PRT is rooted in principles of positive motivation. Researchers have found that increasing children’s participation in activities they enjoy can actually lessen the severity of autism spectrum disorder symptoms and open the door to more positive social interaction. Their work with infants has been highlighted in the Journal of Positive Behavioral Interventions.

Additional information, including a complete schedule, is available at <http://www.education.ucsb.edu/autism>.

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.