



MEREDITH HERALD

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Educating Women to Excel

April 2, 2008

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Chelsea McGlaughlin
Staff Writer

April is Autism Awareness Month, and April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day, so I thought some information about the complex neurobiological disorder would be appropriate. Autism is part of a group of disorders called autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Affecting one in every 150 people, autism is four times more likely to be found in boys than in girls. According to a January issue of *Parade Magazine*, autism is the "fastest-growing developmental disability in the U.S."

While the exact cause of autism is thus far

unknown, autism may be caused by a genetic flaw or environmental chemicals. Autism impairs verbal and nonverbal communication, affects social interaction and often leads to strict routines and repetitive behaviors and obsessions. Each case of autism is unique—each individual with autism has a different experience and can show

mild to very severe signs of autism. Treatments for autism vary, but early diagnosis is crucial for children with autism. With the help of early intervention programs, many children with autism can enter school right alongside their typically developing peers.

Autism at Meredith
Meredith Autism Program (MAP) is a

program in which pre-school-age children with autism receive behavioral intervention. Meredith students work one-on-one with children with autism and their families. According to the Meredith Autism Program website, "The mission of the Meredith College Autism Program (MAP) is to provide a behavioral intervention in which children with autism can develop to their fullest potential, provide undergraduate students experience and education in the field of autism, while validating and expanding the cur-



Autism Speaks and The Bubel/Aiken Foundation support autism awareness



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WEATHER

TODAY: P.M. Showers.
Low 46, High 59.

Thursday: P.M. Showers.
Low 52, High 58.

Friday: Scattered T-Storms. Low 62, High 70.

Saturday: T-Showers.
Low 53, High 73.

Sunday: Partly Cloudy.
Low 49, High 72.

Monday: Partly Cloudy.
Low 52, High 74.

Tuesday: Showers. Low 50, High 74.

Source: www.weather.com
Information retrieved
Tues. Apr. 1 at 3:45 p.m.

Lauren Williams
Contributing Writer

Men and women think and communicate differently. Some, like writer Deborah Tannen, believe this difference can be attributed to society. In her essay "Women and Men Talking on the Job," Tannen explains that women are taught to be overly humble and to suppress their aggressive fighting side. If they do not comply with these understood rules, they are looked down on by society and thought to be bragging, bossy females. Men, on the other hand, are admired if they are aggressive, going after what they want and taking credit for it. Another theory is that this differ-

Society Makes the Difference

ence in men and women is related to biology. In his essay "How Men and Women Think," Nicholas Wade claims that men and women are naturally better at different things. Men tend to be better at math while women have better verbal skills, and these natural differences affect the way each sex thinks and communicates. While biology may play a role, the differences concerning thinking and communicating in men and women seem to be shaped more by society.

Society, whether right or wrong, has a strong influence on people. Everybody wants to be accepted in society; nobody wants to

be shunned. However, most of the time, being accepted means conforming to what is expected or "in." Although society claims that confidence is "in," society encourages women to suppress their certainty. Tannen writes that "it seems that women are more likely to downplay their certainty, men more likely to downplay their doubts." Even in today's world this idea appears to still be true for the majority of women. For example, if a woman is in some kind of business meeting which ideas are pitched, she is likely to pitch hers differently from the way a man would. She would suggest something and sprinkle her ideas with

phrases like "I'm not sure if this is a good idea or not but...." She presents her idea with built-in doubts and apologies. A man, however, usually jumps in, presenting an idea about which he is confident on the surface, even if this confidence is not what he is really feeling underneath. He sells his ideas with assurances such as, "I'd bet on it." Even if he isn't as sure as he appears, he is going to get his pitch noticed.

Men and women do things differently because society has influenced their way of thinking and communicating. Men and women are different biologically, but if

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