



UNESCO Beirut Office
Regional Office for Education in the Arab States

Tuesday 7th of October 2008

9:00- 9:30 Registration

9:30– 10:30 Opening Session

- Mrs. Arwa El-Amine Halawi, President of the Lebanese Autism Society – LAS, member of the National Committee for Disabled Affairs, member of the Higher Council of Childhood, Coordinator of the Coordination Committee for Autism in Lebanon.

- Dr Abdel Moneim Osman, Director of UNESCO Regional Office of Education in the Arab World- Beirut

10:30- 11:30 Keynote Speech “Autism: Thinking Through Early Identification and Intervention”

Mrs. Judith Barnes, Special Educator/Consultant, Portage Trainer

11:30- 12:00 Coffee Break

12:00- 14:00 First Session: Early Identification and Screening of Autism Spectrum Disorders

Chairperson: Mrs. Randa Assi Berri , President of Lebanese Welfare Association for Handicapped.

Moderator: Miss Pauline Nadjarian, Educational Psychologist, Consultant in Special/Inclusive Education, Faculty Member at NDU and the Lebanese University (Health Faculty)

- **“Autism, Early Identification”**

Dr. Mohamed Itani, MBCHB, IFAAP Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics AUB-MC, Founding member of LAS

- **“Happiness is a Choice”**

Mrs. Ghida Rabbat, parent of a child with ASD, Director of SonRise Program.

- **“The Best Social Environment for Early Identification of Autism”**

Mrs Hana Joujou, President of Syndicate of Nursery Owners in Lebanon

- **“Early Identification of Autism in Schools”**

Miss Shaza Ismail, Supervisor for Inclusion Program for special needs students- Al-Mabarrat Schools. Director of preschool at Al-Kawthar Secondary School.

14:00- 15:00

Lunch Break

15:00- 17:00

Second Session: Early Diagnosis: A Multidisciplinary Approach

Moderator: Dr. Samira Al Saad, Director of Kuwait Center for Autism, Member of the Board of Directors of the World Autism Organization.

- **Neurologist:** Dr. Rose Mary Boustany, Chairperson, Abu-Haidar Neuroscience Institute .Professor of Pediatrics and Biochemistry at AUBM. Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics and Neurobiology, Duke.
- **Verbal Therapist:** Mrs. Nadia Mansour, Head of the Communication Section, the Egyptian Society for Developing Skills of Children with Special Needs - Egypt.
- **Clinical Psychologist:** Mr. Hakam M. Kair, Assistant Medical Director for Clinical Services, Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs - Qatar
- **Psychomotor Therapist:** Miss Layal Al Hajj, Head of the Department of Psychomotor Therapy , SESOBEL – Lebanon.

Wednesday 8th of October 2008

9:00 - 11:00 First Session: Early Intervention Programs and Techniques

Chairperson: His Excellency, the Minister of Social Affairs, Dr Mario Aoun.

Moderator: Mrs Rita Mufarrij Merhej, Clinical Psychologist , Lecturer in Psychology at the American University of Beirut, Director of Friends of the Disabled Association

- **Auditory Integration Training- AIT:** Dr. Aladin Ahmad Abou-setta, MD Assistant Professor of Audiology Suez Canal University
- **Floor Time:** Dr Dana Abdulkalek- Educational Psychology, Senior Program Manager, Child Development Institute - California- USA
- **ABA:** Dr Chafika Gharbieh, Education, ABA& VB specialist, founder member& President of Autism Learning Institute for Applied Behaviour Analysis “ALI for ABA” – Lebanon.
- **Portage Program:** Mrs. Judith Barnes, Special Educator / Consultant , Portage Trainer, UK.
- **TEACCH:** Miss Pamela Sayegh, Special Educator -Lebanon.
- **Son- Rise Program**
Teleconference with Mr. Raun Kaufman, CEO of the Autism Treatment Center of America. As a child he was diagnosed with autism.

11:00- 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30- 13:00 Second Session: Early Identification and Early Diagnosis, Experiences in the Arab World

Chairperson: Dr. Hijazi Yaseen Idris, Program Specialist of Basic Education in Arab States, UNESCO Beirut Office, Regional Education Office in the Arab States.

Moderator: Mr. Ismail Zein, Director of Al Hadi Association for Hearing and Visual Impairment and Speech and Communication Disorders, member of UNAPIEI, member of the National Committee for Disabled Affairs.

- **Saudi Arabia :** Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al Dosari, MD, ABP, ABPN, Head section of Pediatric Neurology, King Faysal Specialist Hospital and Research Center. Director, Early Diagnosis and Intervention Unit, Prince Faysal Bin Fahed's Mother's Center for Autism in Riyadh
- **Jordan :** Dr Waleed Sarhan, Consultant in Psychiatry
- **Tunisia:** Mrs. Nagwa Al Zouari, chairperson of Ibn Sina Association, Safaqis- Tunisia
- **Dubai:** Mrs. Christina Bellos, Teacher at the Dubai Autism Center and member of the Assessment and Diagnosis Unit
- **Syria:** Miss Khawla Jaber, Coordinator of Diagnostic Committee in The Syrian Organization for Disabled- AAMAL
- **Soudan:** Malak Mohamed Saleh, Director of Al Malak Walfaire Association for Children with Special Needs
- **Sharjah City:** Mrs Mona Bagh, Director of the Sharjah Autism Center

13:00- 14:00

Lunch Break

14:00- 15:30

Third Session: Early Identification and Early Diagnosis, Experiences in the Arab World

- **Iraq:** Mrs Nebras Sadoon Ridha EL Timimy, Manager of Rami Center for Autistic, Representative of Al-Rami Society for Mental Disabilities, member of Iraqi handicapped society
- **Palestine:** Dr. Waddah Hefzi Masoud Malhees, Consultant in physical medicine and rehabilitation.
- **Qatar :** Samira Al – Qassimi, Deputy Managing Director of Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs.
- **Kuwait:** Dr Samira Al Saad, Director of Kuwait Autism Center Member of the Board of Directors of the World Autism Organization
- **Lebanon:** Mrs Arwa EL Amine Halawi, President of LAS- Lebanese Autism Society , Director of CDIP – Centre de Diagnostic et d'Intervention Précoce
- **Egypt:** Mrs Maha K.Helali, Chairperson of the Egyptian Society for Developing Skills of Children with Special Needs- Advance. UNESCO- EFA Program Coordinator for the CCNGO – SEN Theme in the Arab Region.
- **Yemen:** Mrs. Souad Abdalwasa Al – Eryani, Founder and Chairperson of Yemen Foundation for Special Education & Autism.

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee Break

16:00 - 17:00

Closing Session : Round Table Discussion

Challenges and Difficulties faced in Early Identification and Diagnosis of Autism in the Arab World, Mr. Ismail Zein, Director of Al Hadi Association for Hearing and Visual Impairment and Speech and Communication Disorders, member of UNAPIEI, member of the National Committee for Disabled Affairs

Autism Gulf Union, Dr. Samira Al Saad, Director of Kuwait Autism Center, Member of the Board of Directors of the World Autism Organization

RESEAU- AMIR, Mrs. Nagwa El-Zouari, chairperson of Ibn Sina Association , Safaqis – Tunisia

Coordination Committee for Autism, Arwa El Amine Halawi , President of Lebanese Autism Society, Coordinator of the Coordination Committee for Autism in Lebanon.

Discussions: Creation of an Arab Network for Autism and its Objectives

Recommendations and Plan of Action