

Name of Study: Taste, Smell and Feeding Behavior in Autism: A Quantitative Traits Study

Location: University of Rochester, Rochester, NY

Eligibility Criteria: Families who have at least one child with an autism spectrum disorder (ages 11-17), at least one child without an autism spectrum disorder (ages 11-17), and both biological parents who are interested in participating.

Principal Investigator: Loisa Bennetto, PhD

Contact Information: Robin G. Bender, LMSW, Research Coordinator, (585) 273-4622

Dear Parent:

You and your family are invited to participate in an exciting new study at the University of Rochester. In this study, we are trying to better understand sensory functions in children with autism spectrum disorders and their families, as well as in children without an autism diagnosis. Specifically, we are exploring taste and smell, and how these senses relate to everyday behaviors such as food preferences, eating habits, and other sensory sensitivities. We will also examine how these processes and preferences are shared within families, and will examine the link between these sensory traits and genes that may be important in their functioning. We are looking for families who have at least one child with an autism spectrum disorder (ages 11-17), at least one child without an autism spectrum disorder (ages 11-17), and both biological parents who are interested in participating.

We will first ask you to complete a brief phone screen to confirm eligibility. If your family qualifies, you will then be mailed a packet of questionnaires to complete, for which you will be paid \$20.

If, after review of these questionnaires, your family continues to qualify you will be asked to come in for one or two evaluation sessions.

Session 1: At least one parent and the child with an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis are invited for this 4-hour visit. During this session, your child will participate in some diagnostic and intelligence tests, and you will participate in an interview about your child's developmental history and current functioning. We will pay your family \$75 for this first session. If, after this evaluation, your family continues to qualify for the study, all four participating family members will then be asked to return for a second visit.

Session 2: Both biological parents, the child with an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis, and their sibling with no autism diagnosis are invited for this 3-hour visit. At this visit, all four family members will participate in activities such as smelling and identifying different odors, tasting and identifying different flavors, and completing several surveys about food likes and dislikes. We will pay each family member \$75 for participating in this session.

If you would like more information about this study, contact Robin Bender, LMSW at (585) 273-4622.

Sincerely,

Loisa Bennetto, PhD
Associate Professor of Psychology

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