

SPOTTED

Spotted around the web: Antisense therapies, mosaic mutations, researcher productivity

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Research roundup

- Vocalization patterns at 12 months may predict a future autism diagnosis among infants with an autistic sibling. [Child Development](#)
- A brain response to sound called the N1 auditory evoked potential may differ between autistic and non-autistic people. [Journal of the American Academy of Audiology](#)
- Viewing autism as a set of deficits — a conventional medicine approach — may constrain broader thinking about neurodiversity in society. [Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry](#)
- Researchers have treated multiple children with rare genetic diseases using custom antisense oligonucleotides that obscure short, pathogenic stretches of DNA. [Science](#)
- Autism and intellectual disability in two siblings likely resulted from SCN2A mutations in a small proportion of their father's sperm, a case study finds. *Spectrum* wrote about such **'mosaic' mutations** in July. [Journal of Medical Genetics](#)
- Mice missing the autism-linked gene CNTNAP2 have altered spatial skills, memory processing and neuronal activity in the hippocampus. [Cell Reports](#)

Science and society

- The Autism Science Foundation issued a **statement in support** of applied behavior analysis. *Spectrum* has covered the **controversial therapy** in depth. [Autism Science Foundation](#)
- The Canadian-Israeli Azrieli Foundation has made a \$13 million donation to the National Autism Research Center in Beersheba, the largest gift ever to support autism studies in

Israel. *The Times of Israel*

- In Canada, the province of British Columbia intends to switch its autism support funding to a hub system that spans a broader set of childhood needs, leaving autism advocates and families uncertain if they'll lose their current services. *Global News*
- Science historian and writer Brandy Schillace discusses embracing her gender identity and neurodiversity in a personal essay. *Scientific American*

Know thyself: Painting by essay-writer Brandy Schillace, entitled "Fledging"

Courtesy of Brandy Schillace

- The coronavirus pandemic has impacted the productivity and mental health of researchers, particularly women, people of color and parents of young children. *Nature*
 - A federal effort to oversee autism research and healthcare services in the United States has requested public comment by 30 November for next year's strategic plan. *Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee*
 - Parents of autistic children living in the United Kingdom have reported more difficulty in getting school-based support services than they did four years ago, according to a report by the National Autistic Society. *The Guardian*
 - The U.S. Justice Department has sued Uber for charging extra fees when drivers wait for passengers to arrive, saying it discriminates against people with disabilities. *The New York Times*
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