

SPOTTED

Spotted around the web: Week of 17 December 2018

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WEEK OF DECEMBER 17TH

Research roundup

- Prenatal exposure to phthalates, chemicals found in many plastic products, is not associated with autism, even in otherwise high-risk groups. *Environmental Health*
- When parents play with their babies, their brain activity mirrors changes in the baby's visual attention. *PLOS Biology*
- People who have intellectual disability, with or without autism, are more likely than people in the general population to be hospitalized for conditions that could have been treated by a primary-care clinician. *Autism Research*
- The social hormone oxytocin binds to its receptor less than usual in a reward region of the brain in individuals with autism, according to a study of postmortem tissue. *Translational Psychiatry*
- Athletics programs that “combine relationship building with physical conditioning” may help decrease barriers for autistic children. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*
- Mutations in CHD8, a top autism gene, appear to result in decreased axon and dendrite growth. *Molecular Autism*
- In a mouse model of fragile X syndrome, neuronal structures do not change in response to increased sensory input, as happens in typical mice. *Journal of Neuroscience*

Science and society

- A partial U.S. government shutdown could interrupt several scientific research programs. *Nature*
- A federal judge in Texas ruled that the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, is unconstitutional. *Forbes*

- The American Academy of Pediatrics is calling for better detection and management of depression in women during and after pregnancy. *Pediatrics*
- The U.S. National Institutes of Health is considering security measures to prevent intellectual-property leaks and foreign-government influence on research. *Nature*
- Digital networks inspired by the human nervous system can, in turn, be used to simulate communication imbalances in autism, Alzheimer's disease, rheumatoid arthritis and other conditions. *The Conversation*
- The movie "Rain Man" helped increase awareness of autism, but it is also a narrow depiction of people on the spectrum that perpetuates stereotypes. *The Guardian*
- Parents of autistic children express frustration with the healthcare system and difficulty accessing specialist care. *WCAI*
- A California judge dismissed a lawsuit against Craig Venter that claimed the geneticist stole trade secrets when he left his San Diego-based company Human Longevity in May. *STAT*
- Researchers in China who commit scientific misconduct may soon face consequences that extend well outside of academia. *Nature*

Funding news

- The advocacy organization 500 Women Scientists is launching a fellowship to support women of color who are leading projects in science, technology, engineering and math. *500 Women Scientists*
 - Private funding can help fill gaps left by tightening budgets at federal agencies in the United States. *The Scientist*
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