



THE AUTISM ENIGMA

1 X 52 HD



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Autism is the fastest-rising developmental disorder in the industrialized world. Even accounting for better diagnosis, its numbers have increased by an astounding 600% in the last twenty years. Even more shocking is that science cannot say why. Research is inconclusive, but the emerging theme is that autism is triggered by environment, not heredity, and that our toxic lifestyle is now proving too much for children to bear. Some say it's the canary in the coal mine. Many say it's an emergency.

Meanwhile, 70% of children with autism exhibit severe gastrointestinal symptoms, prompting a few pioneering microbiologists to focus their research on an unexpected part of the body. They ask whether autism actually begins in the gut instead of in the brain.

The film presents the fresh perspective of a bacterial theory of autism. Director Marion Gruner (a new mother who decided to investigate the causes of autism rather than just worry) along with co-director Christopher Sumpton, went beyond celebrity-endorsed theories and common assumptions to make new research accessible and understandable to all parents. Their search for answers takes them from Canada and the US to England and Norway.

Besides examining research in progress, the film features the stories of two extraordinary mothers of autistic sons. One, a Somali immigrant, is cooperating with scientists studying why autism is more prevalent in her community. The other mother took up research herself rather than listen to the usual medical verdict on her son's condition, "It's autism, and there's nothing you can do about it." Her startling home videos show that the resulting experimental treatment of her son's intestinal bacteria gave him the opportunity to learn language, to play, and to become a social member of his family.

The Autism Enigma looks at the progress of an international group of scientists examining the gut's amazingly diverse, and powerful microbial ecosystem for clues to the baffling disorder, and the extraordinary efforts of parents who have been relentlessly pushing science forward in hopes of finding answers for their children's condition.

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CREDITS

Writers & Directors: Marion Gruner and Christopher Sumpton

Producers: Christopher Sumpton, Robin Bengner, and Marion Gruner

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Christopher Sumpton



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