

SafeMinds Executive Director Lisa Wiederlight's Remarks at the Power of One March in Washington, DC April 2, 2016

Good afternoon. It is my pleasure to speak today as SafeMinds executive director. SafeMinds mission is to end the autism epidemic by promoting environmental research and effective treatments.

SafeMinds seeks the answers to the hard questions:

- Why has autism prevalence increased from 1 in 2,000 before the 1980s to 1 in 45 today? If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it's an epidemic.
- Why do the majority of people with autism suffer from gastrointestinal disease? How can we treat it?
- Why do up to 40 percent of people with autism have seizures? How can we treat them?
- Why are people with autism 10 times more likely than their neurotypical peers to commit suicide? How can we address this?

We know that working together yields tenable results. Last year, SafeMinds co-founded the Autism Safety Coalition with many national disability organizations. Today, "Kevin and Avonte's Law," which provides federal funding for law enforcement training on preventing and addressing wandering in people with developmental disabilities sits as introduced in the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, by the leader of that committee, Senator Chuck Grassley, and his colleague, Senator Charles Schumer. We expect this bill to move quickly through the Congress this year.

We can do so much more together.

Andrew Carnegie once said, "Teamwork is the ability to work

together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational directives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”

Today, we can realize the Power of One.

We know that collaboration divides the task and multiplies success. Let's continue moving forward, together.

If you'd like more information on what we are doing at SafeMinds, visit www.safeminds.org, and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

Thank you.