



# Let Me Hear Your Voice: A Family's Triumph over Autism

By Catherine Maurice

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She was a beautiful doelike child, with an intense, graceful fragility. In her first year, she picked up words, smiled and laughed, and learned to walk. But then Anne-Marie began to turn inward. And when her little girl lost some of the words she had acquired, cried inconsolably, and showed no interest in anyone around her, Catherine Maurice took her to doctors who gave her a devastating diagnosis: autism.

In their desperate struggle to save their daughter, the Maurices plunged into a medical nightmare of false hopes, "miracle cures," and infuriating suggestions that Anne-Marie's autism was somehow their fault. Finally, Anne-Marie was saved by an intensive behavioral therapy.

Let Me Hear Your Voice is a mother's illuminating account of how one family triumphed over autism. It is an absolutely unforgettable book, as beautifully written as it is informative.

"A vivid and uplifting story . . . Offers new strength to parents who refuse to give up on their autistic children." -- Kirkus Reviews

"Outstanding . . . Heartfelt . . . A lifeline to families in similar circumstances." -- Library Journal

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### Editorial Review

#### From Kirkus Reviews

A vivid and uplifting story of how a family pulled not one but two children out of the torments of autism--and into a normal life. Maurice is the pseudonym for a mother of three whose courage and determination overrode the pessimistic prognosis that ``autism is incurable.'' She was already pregnant with her third child when her one-year-old daughter, Anne-Marie, was diagnosed as autistic. Maurice and her husband cast about to find not merely a relief from symptoms but a cure, finally adopting the form of behavior modification found successful in carefully controlled studies by O. Ivar Lovaas, a California-based researcher. The program involved a daily regimen of repetitious training, the resetting of patterns of behavior that had gone awry, and the replacement of sympathy by discipline, interrupting the child's repetitive motions and self-withdrawal no matter how she resisted or cried. The family hired a teacher skilled in behavior modification who worked with Anne-Marie every day, as well as a speech therapist who visited three times a week. To counter what she at first felt were the mechanistic techniques of behavior modification, Maurice also took up ``holding therapy,'' which calls for holding the child tightly for at least an hour a day. It was the behavioral techniques that succeeded, and, in less than two years, the girl was pronounced ``normal''--as was Maurice's younger son, also autistic. Unlike other recent books about children who've recovered from autism (e.g., Donna Williams's *Nobody Nowhere*, 1992), this offers not only hope but a road map, with names, addresses, and phone numbers for Lovaas and others. (Caveat: Behavioral therapy, Maurice says, benefits measureably only about 50% of autistic kids.) Powerful in her detailing and in her intelligent, honest observations, Maurice offers new strength to parents who refuse to give up on their autistic children. -- *Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

#### From the Inside Flap

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