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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ASPERGER'S AUTHOR SPEAKS AT BENEFIT LUNCHEON Raising Awareness & Funding For Community Health Services

On Wednesday, September 15, 2010, Metrocare Services, the largest nonprofit provider of mental and behavioral health services in Dallas, will host the *2010 Meal for the Minds* fundraising luncheon at the Belo Mansion. The Keynote Speaker, John Elder Robison, is author of New York Times bestseller *Look Me In The Eye: My Life With Asperger's*. Clint Hurdle, Texas Rangers Hitting Coach and father of a child with special needs, serves as Honorary Chair.

The *2010 Meal for the Minds* is an opportunity to learn more about the complex world of developmental disabilities (including Autism Spectrum Disorders) and mental health, as well as show support for this worthy cause.

13% of children in the United States have a developmental disability. An average of 1 in 110 children have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Asperger's Syndrome, which is often referred to as a high-functioning form of Autism, has created both challenges and opportunities for Keynote Speaker Mr. Robison. By boldly sharing his story at the *2010 Meal for the Minds*, family and friends of those living with Asperger's, or other Autism Spectrum Disorders, will better understand this condition.

1 in 4 adults experience a mental health disorder. Without treatment, the consequences are devastating: unemployment, unnecessary disability, homelessness, substance abuse, unnecessary incarceration, and even suicide. With treatment, however, 70 to 90 percent of patients have a significant reduction of symptoms and an improved quality of life. Metrocare is the safety net that often catches people as the illness appears and their life begins to unravel. With care and treatment at Metrocare, these patients regain control of their lives; finding confidence and hope along the way.

For over 40 years, Metrocare, formerly known as the *Dallas County Mental Health Mental Retardation (MHMR) Center*, has provided mental health care for Dallas citizens. In 2009 Metrocare cared for over 38,000 people with a mental illness or an intellectual or developmental disability. The need for community health care continues to rise. In fact, Metrocare served 20% more patients during the 2nd quarter of 2010 than in the same quarter of 2009. Most of these individuals found help at a Metrocare mental health clinic regardless of whether they had insurance to cover the cost. Many others were served by Metrocare's Center for Children with Autism, Behavioral Treatment Center, Therapeutic Nursery, or Early Childhood Intervention (ECI).

Luncheon guests will be treated to an art exhibit by **Art Focus XC**, an elite group of Dallas artists, as well as the 3rd annual **Edible Auction** featuring cakes from Dallas' top pastry chefs. Sponsors include Millet the Printer, Inc., Morgan & Weisbrod, Social Security Disability Attorney, and Julie and Pierce Noble. For sponsorship information contact Lindsay Zimmerman (214-743-1220). Tickets available online at metrocareservices.org. **Limited seating available.**

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For more information, please contact Lindsay Zimmerman (214-743-1220 or lindsay.zimmerman@metrocareservices.org). Information about Metrocare can also be found at www.metrocareservices.org.