



Susan Axelrod
President and Founder, CURE

Susan Axelrod is President and founding member of Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy (CURE). In 1998, Axelrod and two other mothers, frustrated with their inability to protect their children from the devastation of uncontrollable seizures and the side effects of medications, joined forces to spearhead the search for a cure for epilepsy.

Under Axelrod's leadership, CURE has successfully redefined the goals of epilepsy research as "no seizures, no side effects." CURE funds cutting-edge research grants exploring new areas and also sponsors landmark conferences, beginning with the 2000 National Institutes of Health (NIH) Conference, *Curing Epilepsy: Focus on the Future*. This White House-initiated, CURE co-sponsored conference was unprecedented and resulted in the development of the Epilepsy

Research Benchmarks—comprehensive and ambitious research goals aimed at finding cures. Axelrod and CURE's commitment to the health of epilepsy patients has earned the organization the prestigious 2008 Child Neurology Foundation Advocacy Award of Merit.

Axelrod serves on the NIH's National Advisory Neurological Disorders and Stroke Council and also as a consumer reviewer for the Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program in the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program within the Department of Defense.

She has also brought long overdue media exposure to epilepsy and the devastating effects it can have on individuals and their families, appearing on the TODAY show, MSNBC's Morning Joe, CNN with Campbell Brown and MSNBC with Andrea Mitchell. The February 15, 2009 PARADE magazine cover story, "I Must Save My Child," shared Axelrod and her family's experience with epilepsy and why CURE was founded, and the April 20, 2009 edition of Newsweek featured a personal essay by Axelrod in their cover package, "The Mystery of Epilepsy: Why we must find a cure."

Axelrod has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors for her passionate advocacy. She was selected as a 1996 United Way "Community Hero," for which she was presented the honor of carrying the Olympic torch in the relay to Atlanta. She was also an invited speaker at the Inaugural Judith Hoyer Lecture in Epilepsy, *New Attitudes and New Approaches to Treating Epilepsy*, sponsored by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke in November of 2003, and has spoken at many other conferences around the country and the world. She is the recipient of Research!America's 2007 Llura and Gordon Gund Volunteer Leadership Award.

Axelrod received a Masters in Business Administration/Health Service Administration from the University of Chicago Business School after earning a Bachelors degree in humanities from Colorado College.

Axelrod, a mother of three, resides in Chicago and Washington, DC with her husband David. Her oldest child, Lauren, began having uncontrollable seizures at seven months old, which have caused significant developmental delays and for which no cause has been identified. After 18 desperate years spent trying to control her seizures—over 20 medications, special diets, an electronic implant, and repeated surgical evaluations—Lauren finally achieved seizure freedom in 2000. Lauren now lives and works in a supported residential program in Chicago.

Register online to attend.