

The New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Putting the Pieces Together in the Granite State

ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY ARRA

The NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders received \$50,000 in Part C funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Funding supported a part-time administrative director engaged in the following projects that benefited children birth to three who experience autism or a related disability.



DEVELOPMENT & ADOPTION OF CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PROVIDERS WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CHILDREN WITH ASD

They are called Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), line therapists, and para-professionals depending upon the setting — and the funding — for their work. They are the providers who work one-on-one with children who experience autism or a related disability and they are a vital part of the team that delivers treatment and supports.

Along with the general background that they must master to be effective caregivers, DSPs who work with someone on the spectrum are often required to participate in complex behavioral or treatment protocols. In collaboration with educators and therapists, the Council Work Group on Education has developed a list of Core Competencies specific to ASD. This document is intended to provide helpful guidance to parents, special educators, and those planning a career in direct support, as well as organizations interested in providing appropriate training.



“TELL ME NOW”

A PARENT TRAINING

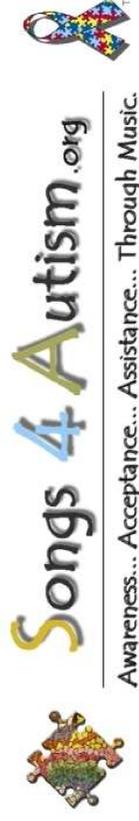
When interviewed about their early experience in adjusting to a child's diagnosis of ASD, parents often report that they were frustrated by how long it took them to “learn the ropes.” They express dismay that well-meaning providers sometimes withhold information from them in order to protect them from becoming too overwhelmed.

In response, the Council partnered with Easter Seals Family Support Specialists to create a core curriculum for training parents. “Tell Me Now” was presented to over 75 parents from throughout New Hampshire in three separate series. Twenty of those parents completed the full 15 hour curriculum in order to become supporting parents through the Parent Connects project at Easter Seals.



COUNCIL STANDS BY CONNOR'S LAW FOR ASD TREATMENT

Although signed into law just last August, NH's expanded coverage for the treatment of ASD already faced legislative challenge this year. Along with continuing to educate lawmakers about the importance of Connor's Law, the Council worked directly with area agencies and private providers to assist them in understanding the new benefit. In partnership with the Community Support Network, Inc. (CSNI) the Council developed a billing structure that meets the business needs of providers and has actively sought to inform carriers about the need for an approach that reflects how behavior-based therapy is administered in the field.



The NH Commission on ASD recommended that the Autism Society of NH play a strong role in raising public awareness about many aspects of autism — the importance of early identification and treatment, the challenges faced by families, and the positive contributions that individuals with the unique features of ASD can and do make to our society.

A complicated message requires artful expression, so the Council turned to Musicians for a Cause to help families tell their stories through music. The Songs 4 Autism Campaign launched on June 4, 2011. The Council is seeking 500 families willing to raise \$500 each and to spread their challenge to the world: “Get to Know Us.” To learn more, go to



www.songs4autismnh.org

About the Council

The NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders was created by the state legislature in 2008 in order to coordinate the efforts of the many groups interested in improving services and supports to those who experience ASD and their families. Their work is guided by the recommendations of a Blue Ribbon Commission that reviewed the systems of care that assist individuals with ASD in the Granite State. These findings were published in 2008.

WHO SERVES ON THE COUNCIL?

Certain individuals serve on the Council by statute. Others are appointed by groups named under the law.

Brian Huckins, Chair	Council Leadership	Parent, appointed by Governor John Lynch
Kirsten Murphy, Administrative Director (Ex officio)		
Brian Balke	Council Membership	Representing the NH Association of Special Education Administrators
Virginia M. Barry, PhD		Commissioner, NH Department of Education
Teresa Bolick, PhD		Representing the NH Psychological Association
Mary Anne Cooney		Deputy Commissioner, Department of Health & Human Services
Matthew Ertas		Administrator, Bureau of Developmental Services
Adrienne Evans		Representing the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities
Amy Frechette		Self Advocate, Appointed by Governor John Lynch
Lisa Hatz		Director, Division of Career Technology & Adult Learning
Gregory Prazar, MD		Representing the New Hampshire Medical Society
Jose Montero, MD		Director, Division of Public Health Services
Kathleen Murphy		Director, Division of Instruction, Department of Education
Erik Riera		Administrator, Bureau of Behavioral Health
Susan W. Rockwell		Representing Community Support Network, Inc. (CSNI)
Mary Schuh, PhD		Representing the NH Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire

OTHER COUNCIL PROJECTS:

Save the Date: **April 6, 2012**

Council Sponsored Conference

Social Thinking® in the Transition to Adulthood

Featuring Pamela J. Croke, PhD

The Council is also please to announce that the Work Group on Education has received funding to prepare a State of the State Paper reviewing access to and utilization of best practices in inclusive classroom settings for students with ASD.

TEMP: The Technology Enhanced Materials Project

Treatment & Training

In the last 12 to 18 months, a host of new products have appeared which promise to bring new efficiencies to the treatment of autism spectrum disorders. Web-based treatment planning programs, online training, and Internet facilitated consultation have the potential to extend the geographic reach of highly skilled professionals, streamline training, improve communication among team members, and lower overall program costs.

TEMP piloted two of these software packages with eight families enrolled in Early Supports and Services. We tracked their utilization and interviewed parents and providers to find out which features they found most useful. Additionally, we spoke with behaviorists familiar with the eLearning curriculum developed by CARD.

The Take Home Message: *All are excellent programs. Each was designed with a primary user in mind — teacher, parent, or ABA therapist. The product's relative strengths reflect the needs of the intended market. Parents gravitated toward the user friendly interface of ReThink Autism, which contains extensive video. Therapists were most comfortable with CARD, which supports ABA programming. Educators, on the other hand, appreciated the flexibility of Autism Pro, which offers therapeutic activities using three different approaches — one focused on ABA, one oriented toward developmental methods, and a third that uses a social-pragmatic approach.*



The world is changing...

So is autism treatment.

Communicating

The iPad is revolutionizing the education and treatment of individuals with autism and other communication disorders. With the swipe of a finger, even very young children are learning to navigate applications that replace the picture exchange communication system (PECS), teach how to read facial expressions, provide visual schedules, and make expressive language through typing easier. TEMP has purchased 20 iPads which will be distributed to Early Supports and Services programs throughout NH. An intensive training is planned for June 27 so that ESS providers have a chance to experiment with all the latest apps.



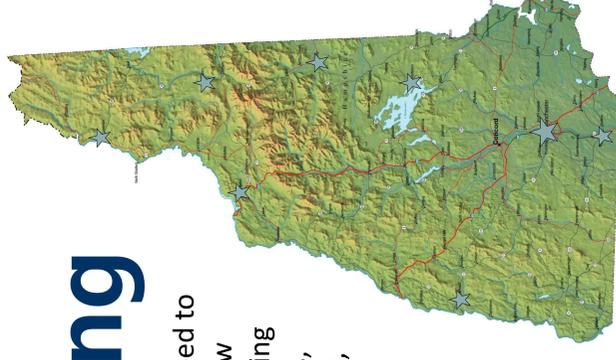
Key Features of Web-based

Programs for Treatment Planning

	Autism Pro The Choice of Educators	ReThink Autism Parent Preference	CARD For ABA Therapists
Generates an individualized curriculum of therapeutic play and activities based on assessment; curriculum is developmentally sequenced. Supervising therapist can override the program to select alternative activities.	Subscribers can select from one of 3 approaches: ABA, developmental, or social/behavioral. Assessment covers 8 developmental domains	Assessment tool covers 8 developmental domains.	Assessment tool covers 8 developmental domains.
Includes a data sharing platform so that parents and professionals have access to the same information. Generates graphed data summarizing the child's progress.	Parents reported a reluctance to use this feature. Autism Pro restricts the ability to move to the next level of activity.	Despite the relatively easy interface, parents still reported a reluctance to use this feature.	Data sharing platform is easy to access and navigate.
Describes the goal and steps for each exercise using a written lesson plan and/or video demonstration .	Lesson plans for all activities; video to illustrate basic concepts.	All activities are demonstrated with video.	All activities are demonstrated with video.
Provides video-based training for parents, line therapists, and others with voice-over explanation. Some provide testing to assess retention of the material learned.	Workshops: Provides 50 hours of online training that can be used by anyone in a school environment — paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, etc.	Created by documentary film makers, this is a strength area; parents reported that they highly valued the more than 1500 video demonstrations.	eLearning: Provides 40 hours of online training for line providers of ABA programs; includes content testing that must be achieved with 80% accuracy.
Company provides customer support . In some cases, they may also provide consultation with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst who reviews video footage of the child's therapy.	Technical support is readily available but professional consultation is more limited.	Internet consultation available for a fee. Company sends weekly online tips to parents.	Internet consultation available for a fee. CARD has extensive experience with online consulting.
Costs calculated as a monthly subscription, with price reductions when multiple licenses are purchased.	Pricing is complex, due to 3 different products: Workshops (for training); Resource Manager (data platform); and Professional.	Individual monthly subscriptions range from \$59 — \$89 / month. School subscriptions also available.	Skills is approximately \$75/mo for parents; \$250/mo for professionals serving 5 children. eLearning is \$150.

Connecting

During April and May, TEMP helped to showcase the Area Agencies' new teleconferencing capacity. Working in collaboration with Easter Seals, CSNI, and the NH Council on ASD, TEMP broadcast the parent training series "Tell Me Now" from Manchester to seven other sites. Over 65 parents and providers joined this virtual network of families that reached from Errol to Nashua, Claremont to Conway.



In providing feedback, participants told TEMP that they appreciated connecting with a wider community of parents, even if the technology required some patience. It was very helpful to the presenter to have a second facilitator who could orchestrate the necessary turn taking as each site offered questions or comments. Parent participants also expressed a strong desire to have this training available in a video format.

