

State of Vermont
Autism Task Force Meeting
MINUTES
2-13-09

Committee Meetings 9:30-10:30 am
Task Force Meeting 10:30 am –12:30 pm

National Bank’s Community Room
308 N. Main Street
Barre, VT

Mission

The mission of the Vermont Autism Task Force is to coordinate the efforts of interested parties who serve individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families, and to promote the implementation of best practices throughout the state of Vermont.

Norms:

- We work hard to start the meeting on time, people come as soon as they can & they will inform the group if they need to leave early at the beginning of the meeting
- We allow people to finish speaking
- We are respectful of one another in discussions of children, adolescents & adults with ASD, their families, & the professionals, programs & agencies that work with them
- We actively solicit diverse ways of looking at things
- We use person first language (e.g., child with autism versus, autistic child)
- We recognize when more information is needed before a discussion can proceed
- We clarify actions that need to be taken, by whom and when
- We collaboratively determine agenda items for a meeting and important topics that should be discussed as a group
- We revisit our norms periodically and make changes as needed

MEMBERS SENDING THEIR REGRETS: Stan Baker, Holly Betit, Pascal Cravedi Cheng, Jessica Levi, Ron Marcellus, Hilary Melton, Angela Timpone, Marie-Christine Potvin, Claire Bruno, Claudia Pringles

PRESENT: Patty Prelock, Amy Cohen, Lisa Erwin Davidson, Jim Caffry, Clare McFadden, Tim Fox, Joy Wilcox

Establish Roles

Facilitator: Patty Prelock

Recorder: Amy Cohen
Time Keeper: Joy Wilcox
Rudder Keeper: Lisa Erwin Davidson
Equalizer: Clare McFadden
Processor: Tim Fox
Wellness: Jim Caffry

Introductions

Updates from members

- Patty provided an update on the **Summer Autism Institute, June 22-26, 2009**
 - Monday, June 22, 2009**=>Richard Simpson, University of Kansas-
Evidence Based Practice across all interventions related to ASD
FREE 3:30-5:00 pm session
Understanding the legal framework to advocate & plan for your
child's & adult's need
SPEAKERS: Jim Caffry, Jerry Jones, Claudia Pringles
 - Tuesday, June 23, 2009**=>Paula Kluth, Illinois
Inclusive Practices for Children with ASD
FREE 3:30-5:00 pm session
Project SUCCEED
SPEAKERS: Students & Staff from HowardCenter Developmental
Services
 - Wednesday, June 24, 2009**=>David Wacker & Jay Harding, Univ of
Iowa FBA's and Functional Communication Training
VABA Meeting
 - Thursday & Friday, June 25 & 26, 2009**=>Lynn & Bob Koegel, Univ.
of CA, Santa Barbara, Pivotal Response Training (Level 1 Certification
will be given to all attendees for both days)
THURSDAY at lunch=>Resource Fair
FREE 3:30-5:00 pm session
Disclosing an ASD Diagnosis
SPEAKER: Amy Ducker Cohen

Brochure will be ready in March

Parents will likely be supported in their attendance to the conference

There is also funding for para's, respite providers, PCA's, to attend

- The Institute week is conflicting with the BEST Institute and a conference being sponsored by the Higher Ed Collaborative on Brain Functioning
- There is some concern that as schools and agencies respond to budget limitations, availability to support staff to attend trainings will be limited

Membership Report

- ✓ New members (Nicole and Dean = All responses by email were positive creating a quorum)

- ✓ Clarification on exact number for quorum
 - ✓ Current email list – including changes from Verizon to Fairpoint email
 - ✓ Inactive status for Steve C.
- *Held over to the next meeting as Claudia was unable to attend today's meeting*

Accommodations

- Clare shared materials from DAIL about how to make meetings accessible
- Clare suggested that someone needs to check in with Nicole about what kinds of supports she might need
- **ACTIONS:**
 - Patty will check in with Stan about who made the initial contact with Nicole, whether she has been formally invited following the approval, whether there is someone who has agreed to be her formal task force support person
 - Someone with whom Nicole is familiar should be assigned her support person for the meeting; that person should meet with the Nicole 20 minutes prior to the meeting to review the agenda, facilitate her participation during the meeting & be available to process and review what happened right after the meeting
 - **All members** are asked to review the document Claire distributed
- It will be important to assure that the person assigned as the support person be a regular attender to assure the support is available consistently

Meagan Roy's Request for ATF member input on her research rubric via a survey

- Meagan shared an update about her interest in ASD and her current status as a doctoral student in Educational Leadership
- Meagan has created a rubric tool to be used by programs to evaluate their services for children with ASD
- She is currently working on a pilot study to validate this tool, which looks at whether schools and programs have the right system in place to teach students with special needs (staff, resources, knowledge)
- She is asking ATF Members to look at elements of the rubric and rate how important we see these to determining program needs for children with ASD
- She will then pilot the measure in 12 schools, through site visits, interviews, and reviews of records and materials
- The rubric results in a score which reflects the extent to which a school has evidence of the elements of the rubric.
- Next phase will involve looking at student outcomes. This phase will be conducted later in the summer. She will use assessment or alternate assessment scores.
- Meagan passed out a copy of the rubric for members to review and a survey where we are asked to rate each element of the rubric as to its importance. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete
- **ACTIONS:**

- Meagan will also share the electronic version of the rubric & survey for Patty to share with task force members who were unable to attend today's meeting
- Amy will share the material with Pascal & Stan, Patty will share the material with Steve & Marie-Christine, and Clare will share the material with Claire B as these are task force members they see regularly
- Patty will send the remaining ATF members the survey electronically and if they wish to participate they can download the document, complete it and send it back to Meagan
- Meagan shared information about the process of selecting schools for phase 2 of her study- the initial focus on Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties but they may be expanding their search
- Review the rubric, complete the survey and offer any comments at the end of the survey and return to Meagan. The comments section should focus on the question of whether the concept of the rubric is important
- Please note- THERE SHOULD BE A 5 IN THE RATING SCALE OPTIONS

Committee reports

- ✓ Insurance: Act on approval of ATF Insurance Committee mission statement (Ron to bring or supply)
- ✓ Competencies Committee
- ✓ Workload Committee

Insurance committee

- Lisa shared an updated mission statement & asked Task Force members to review
- There was a discussion around the mission statement, the intention behind it, the need for some wording changes and a larger discussion about whether the Task Force has publically made a statement around our belief that Insurance providers need to participate in the coverage of services for ASD.
- Lisa updated what the insurance committee has done so far, which includes looking at national efforts at pursuing insurance coverage and following Autism Speaks national efforts. What they currently feel is missing is specific Vermont stories
- The committee is interested in sending out a survey to the family support group participants to gather information about how the current insurance coverage process is working for these families.
- Jim raised some issues around discrepancy in services across the state and that those don't appear to be related to insurance differences but rather education budget differences
- Jim's comments highlight the inequities across the state and the fact that we don't have a unified system for addressing service and funding issues.
- It was suggested that a support document highlighting what we know about VT, and the lack of coordinated effort, and what we would want insurance companies to be doing that they are not currently doing be prepared
- The Insurance Committee has explored what VT insurance companies have to say about what their current service provision is for ASD

- The Task Force recommended that we ask Autism Speaks directly to help us figure out what the insurance needs are in VT and what we need to do to facilitate action as this organization has been highly successful in supporting this activity in more than 20 other states.
 - o **ACTION:** Members of the Insurance committee will discuss how/who will make the connection with Autism Speaks
- We will hold off on doing anything in written form (i.e., the mission statement) until the connection with Autism Speaks has been made and there is a clear plan on how to tackle this problem from their previous experiences doing this with other states
- Related to the discussion on service funding, Clare shared information about an audit that was conducted following the Autism Plan report regarding overall funding on ASD. The recommendation from that plan was to continue to look at private insurance to assist with those costs.

Competencies Committee:

- Clare reported that the committee has gathered multiple documents related to competencies developed by different groups
- They will be looking at them and trying to synthesize them
- Committee members were not available to engage in further work today

Work Load Committee

- Have reviewed caseload/workload documents provided from different organizations (OT, SLP, SPED, Psychology)
- Committee reviewed these and tried to synthesize the relevant activities
- They have a draft workload document that they will share with the ATF
- Their next step will be to look at the findings of time studies done by case managers. These studies are done over a 2-week period. These will be examined to evaluate information about how case managers are currently using their time.
- May be followed by a survey of case managers to assess approximate time spent on each activity for each child with ASD they are case managing
 - o **ACTION:** Patty will send a copy of the draft document summarizing their current assessment of ASD Case Manager activities.

Update on unified advocacy

Held over until the March meeting as Holly was not here to provide an update.

RBI

Held over until the March meeting as Claudia was not present today

Update on Vermont Autism Plan Advisory Committee

- All applications have been gathered
- More professional response than parent/individual response
- Appointments will be made by commissioner of ED and of DAIL.
- Appointments will be made shortly
- Committee members will decide term limits

- Patty questioned whether the work of the Autism Plan Advisory Committee will trump the work of the Autism Task Force and whether the Task Force should continue to exist once it is developed.
- Clare suggested that the new committee will be **advisory** in nature, but won't be doing **"tasks"** like the current task force does.
- Members present agreed that the two don't serve the same purpose
- That said, it may be the appropriate time to re-focus, restructure our ATF meeting schedule
- Considered every other month meetings, with longer committee meetings on the opposite months.
 - o **ACTION:** Patty will send an email to Task Force Members proposing the new plan of every other month meetings, with sub-committee meetings on the off months.
- Appointed chairs of sub-committee- **Clare-** Competencies committee (Tim joined this committee, **Lisa-** Insurance committee, **Claire-** Workload committee, **Amy-** Toolkit & website committee
- It was decided that the best practice and EI committees are not a current priority
 - o **ACTIONS:**
 - Patty will send a reminder of committee membership (**SEE BELOW**)
 - There will not be a March ATF meeting but we will have one in April
 - Clare will investigate other meeting space options that will have conference call availability to facilitate member participation; she will share that information with Stan and Patty.

REMINDER OF COMMITTEES for 2008-2009

1. Competencies for ASD case managers
 - a. MEMBERS: **Clare (Chair)**, Tim, Terry, Stan and Pascal
2. Workload for ASD case managers
 - a. MEMBERS: Patty, Joy, Claire (**Chair**), Holly, and Jessica
3. Insurance coverage for ASD intervention
 - a. MEMBERS: Lisa E. (**Chair**), Claudia, Jim, Angela, Ron
4. Toolkit & website (standing committee)
 - a. MEMBERS: Amy (**Chair**), Hilary, Marie-Christine
5. Membership (standing committee)
 - a. MEMBERS: Claudia (recruitment of new members & membership list updates) & Jim (membership protocol & procedures)

NOTE: Other inactive members or members on leave may be accessed for support on any of these committees as appropriate

Agenda Setting for Next Meeting =>

- o Unified Advocacy
- o RBI
- o ToolKit Update

- Membership Updates
- Subcommittee Updates

Processing

Tim reported that the meeting went well. The smaller group allows for a lot of discussion, which will be a benefit to the new structure. Participants reported a lot of input and direction on next steps.

Wellness

Jim shared that he and his wife will be traveling to Chicago to the ASA national conference.