

State of Vermont
Autism Task Force Meeting
Minutes
4-10-09

Committee Meetings (if you require this time) 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, Marie-Christine Potvin, Lisa Erwin Davidson, Tim Fox, Amy Cohen, Hilary Melton, Jim Caffry, Nicole LeBlanc, Dean Mooney, Claire Bruno

PRESENT: Angela Timpone, Joy Wilcox, Holly Betit, Ron Marcellus, Clare McFadden, Pascal Cravedi Cheng, Patty Prelock, Claudia Pringles, Jessica Levi

Establish Roles

Facilitator: Clare

Recorder: Patty
Time Keeper: Pascal
Rudder Keeper: Joy
Equalizer: Ron
Processor: Angela
Wellness: Holly

Introductions

Welcome new members=>Nicole LeBlanc & Dean Mooney (not able to attend today's meeting)

NOTE: If Nicole needs a ride Angela or Claudia are able to pick her up & they will plan to meet with her ahead

Updates from members=>Lots of great things happening across the state!

Partners in Care Conference on Resilience is being held on Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center in Burlington, VT

Chittenden Families Together is sponsoring Eric Johnson, Transition Counselor, from Burlington Voc-Rehab who will present on Wednesday, April 29, 2009 from 5:30-6:30 at the VFN conference room.

Parenting for Autism is coming together nicely=>focusing on fundraising and recently received a nice donation & working on grants & federal earmarks; working to increase their Board; doing parenting workshops for 4 Saturdays across the state of Vermont during the month of April for Autism Awareness; Montpelier will have a workshop in May

Camp Kaleidoscope is completely booked; dates June 18-21, 2009

Parents Supporting our Children in Bennington has such been incorporated & working on nonprofit status; doing a workshop, forum, & resource fair; & provide parent social support

SUCCEED=>program is expanding next year; should be a day student option; numbers will double; program continues to get applications—more than available slots

East Montpelier Summer Program has gotten a boost because of the Stimulus package to increase program & offer it to surrounding districts; will increase opportunities for field trips; believe they can take at least 15 children with ASD and possibly others with challenges plus there are typical peers & colleagues who are volunteering; either 3 weeks, or 6 weeks, 8:30-3:00, Monday through

Thursday, with a focus on academics and social skills; kindergarten through middle school

Vermont Family Network Awards will be announced at the PIC conference on May 27th—category has been added this year for a school professional who is doing a program; other categories include awards for a youth, adult or sibling with a disability; caregiver or parent; and a professional

Aaware=>is creating a directory for families of children with disabilities that features their small businesses; will be on their website

The Bridge Program—any family with a child with a developmental disability can apply for a case manager

Asperger Association of NE=>looking to expand presence of this organization in Vermont; lots of activity in Rutland but not much activity beyond this area

Update on Summer Autism Institute June 22-26, 2009

Brochure was sent to ATF members and is on the CMSI website (www.uvm.edu/~cmsi)

ACTIONS: Patty to send brochure to Chris to place on ASVT website
Patty to follow up with Lisa about the free workshops to confirm all speakers and topics.

Membership Report

- Claudia mentioned a need to follow up with those who have been unable to attend; they will move to inactive status
 - **ACTION:** Claudia will contact those unable to attend and offer inactive membership
 - **NOTE:** Members moving to inactive status opens up membership for 4 new members, 2 parents & 2 professionals; still have one other opening for an adult with ASD
- Need updated list of active and inactive members
 - **ACTIONS:**
 - Claudia will send the e-mails of those who are inactive and those who are active
 - Claudia will send to Chris the updated lists of the ATF & the subcommittees
- Members need to update their e-mail lists for active and inactive members
 - **ACTION:** Claudia will send ATF members the e-mails of active vs. active + inactive members
- Who should review minutes prior to placement on web as pdfs?
 - **ACTION:** Draft minutes will be sent to active members & they will be reminded by Stan and Patty that they have one week to make any

corrections before the minutes are sent to Chris as a pdf to place on the website

Insurance working group reported to ATF about activities related to insurance

coverage=>goals have been: (1) to elicit experiences from VT families re: insurance coverage for autism services (this may also include for developmental delay); (2) to review printed information on VT and other states regarding current coverage & limitations; and, (3) identify gaps in coverage. Ron presented the summary Lisa prepared for the Task Force:

- A teleconference occurred with Kirsten Murphy, Executive Director ARCH of the Upper Valley, Inc., NH Council on ASD Work Group on Insurance Issues, drafter of “Connor’s Law” seeking full and fair coverage for tx of autism NH. She was asked for her input & suggestions. She sent 6 documents for review & *suggested 3 priorities: (1) Legislator alliance building & find bipartisan support for an insurance coverage bill – something Angela and Ron have already started from an Autism Awareness perspective, (2) research and gather information on current state of coverage; (3) effective solution-based advocacy for insurance coverage.*
- Given legislative interest and timing, the working group hopes to hire Kirsten Murphy as a consultant
- Will be collecting information from a survey that would be sent to all autism groups in VT to eventually share with legislators
- Lisa attempted to contact Judith Ursiti of Autism Speaks a couple times – keep missing each other – but hope to get her perspective and acquire any useful info on VT insurance reform

ACTIONS: Ron will e-mail the update to Patty; ATF can review the survey to provide feedback to the insurance group.

Committee reports

- ✓ **Competencies Committee**=>had a phone conference since the last meeting; collected documents from other states that have competencies around case managers for ASD, specifically=>school, developmental disabilities and mental health case managers; the committee is identifying common elements and examining the language used; will bring a document to the ATF for review and then have other groups review as appropriate—DD, SPED, MH; goal would be an identified skill set for ASD case managers across the 3 service environment that could be used as a guide to ensure staff get the training they need to ensure competency in case management.
- ✓ **Workload Committee**=>we have identified the tasks of school case managers; then used information from time studies to look at percentage of time for the various required activities; activities mandated by federal vs. state law are highlighted in color; trying to get a larger sample of time studies
 - **ACTION:** Patty & Joy to send document to the ATF for review
- ✓ **Website & Toolkit**

- Clare noted that we still have funding from AHS for support of the Website
- Patty shared the updates she was aware from committee members=>committee is working on health updates; the focus on intervention ratings has been decreased as we will be using the results of the National Standards Project that will be available soon.

Stimulus Package=>What are the possibilities for autism?

- The stimulus package dollars will support state of art technical assistive devices, professional development in SPED, data collection, inclusive practices & transitions; \$57 million in autism research ; money has to be spent in the next 2-3 years
 - **ACTION:** Clare will forward information she gathered on how districts are suppose to be using the dollars
- Lots of money coming to schools, how can we tap into this so we can get at least one person trained in every school district in autism—could school districts use dollars to pay for the training for ASD case managers through the HEC Autism Training Program?
 - Joy shared a letter from Dennis Kane talking about the possibilities for getting SPED coordinators to consider the autism course sequence for some of their staff
 - Districts have discretion in how they can use the funds so ATF members are encouraged to remind districts of this training possibility
 - www.vthec.org
 - Needs to be an expectation that training occurs in the district
- Clare reported on some ideas for doing a research project on HFA & AS based on Michelle Garcia Winner’s social thinking curriculum to facilitate a skill set needed to transition; also there is a possibility for funding additional pilot projects through Voc-Rehab—would like to use stimulus dollars to increase the number projects & evaluate their effectiveness=> Clare is working with CDCI
- We need to have access to training on *Positive Behavior Supports* (PBS) and *Functional Behavioral Assessment* (FBA) => this is identified as an area of need in the federal regulation
 - The DOE has an initiative on PBS
 - David Wacker & Jay Harding will be presenting on FBA and Functional Communication Training on Wednesday of the Summer Autism Institute

Retreat

- Do we want to schedule a retreat for the summer?
 - Summer is more difficult for families to attend a retreat
 - Fall or Spring makes more sense
 - We should keep working the tasks within our committee & maybe we will have more products in the fall to really review and talk about
 - Would be great to see if we can have it at National Life again

- **ACTION:** Clare will check on the possibility to use the National Life site
- Possible dates for the retreat in the fall: Friday, September 11 or 18 from 10:00-3:30
 - **ACTION:** Patty will send a doodle around to see which of the two dates is likely to bring the most members to the meeting

Update on unified advocacy

- See Holly's letter identifying a goal for unified advocacy
- Maybe Pow Wow could be used to identify a legislative platform for parents to focus their energies and discussion with legislators
- Parents talked about the possibilities for the meeting the evening before the Summer Autism Institute
- Claudia followed up with Lisa to make sure that the Pow Wow will still occur as part of the Summer Autism Institute

Agenda Setting for Next Meeting: WE WILL MEET May 8, 2009=>

- NOTE:** Members prefer to meet in MAY and then take a hiatus in the summer since June-July –August are difficult months to meet and get attendance by parents who have children out of school
- Agenda for Retreat in the Fall
 - RBI (Claudia)
 - Update on Vermont Autism Plan Advisory Committee (Clare)