

**State of Vermont**  
***Autism Task Force Meeting***  
**MINUTES**  
**9-12-08**  
**9:00 am –1:15 pm**

**Community National Bank’s Meeting 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 WHO HAVE SENT THEIR REGRETS:** Lisa Lowler, Susan Engles, Hillary Hilton, and Doug Smith

**MEMBERS WHO WERE PRESENT:** Lisa Erwin-Davidson, Marie-Christine Potvin, Clare McFadden, Claire Bruno, Stan Baker, Jessica Levi, Pascal Cravedi-Cheng, Angela Timpone, Patty Prelock, Steve Contompasis, Linda Mulley, Tim Fox, Claudia Pringles and Jim Caffry.

**ROLES**

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Stan Baker and Patty Prelock
<b>Recorder:</b>	Marie-Christine Potvin
<b>Timekeeper:</b>	Pascal Cheng
<b>Rudder Keeper:</b>	Steve Contompasis
<b>Processor:</b>	Jessica Levi
<b>Wellness:</b>	Lisa Erwin-Davidson

## **Members Updates:**

- ⇒ Linda Mulley is resigning from the ATF after 12 years of committed participation. She may continue to participate in ATF committee work.
- ⇒ Patty Prelock is back from sabbatical.
- ⇒ The SUCEED Program from Howard was launched successfully this Fall. 7 adults with ASD are currently enrolled in the program and are taking UVM courses as well as SUCEED courses on campus. SUCEED courses include time management and social skills (taught by Pascal Cheng). One of the goals of the program is to include UVM students with Asperger's in the SUCEED courses as well.
- ⇒ Jessica Levi completed the SLP assistant program and is working in a school. Congratulations!
- ⇒ The VT state I-Team has a new regional consultant in the North West region (Newport area), Kevin Smith. I-Team members attended the TEACCH training this summer. The I-Team is planning ASD workshops across the state this year looking at instruction in natural settings.
- ⇒ Linda Mulley and Patty Prelock presented a workshop on collaborative teaming, specifically working with tough teams facing issues related to service delivery for students with ASD.
- ⇒ Linda Mulley and Chris Knippenberg have been working to develop a web-based TEACCH learning curriculum. Eventually they will be seeking input from the ATF on this. Next, they will be developing an early literacy curriculum. They also maintain a blog related to these topics (on Bubble Share).
- ⇒ Camp Kaleidoscope was a great success!!! Families from all over the east coast participated. SLPs and OTs came to camp to work as family partners with families they were paired with. Many community volunteers helped as well. Next year, they are hoping to do two, 4-day camp sessions.
- ⇒ Disability Awareness week with 2<sup>nd</sup> year medical students will occur again this year.
- ⇒ Marie-Christine Potvin is completing data collection on her study about Recreational Participation in children with High Functioning Autism compared to neuro-typical children. Preliminary results are interesting. At this point, recruitment of neuro-typical children is the primary focus. Families with boys ages 7-13 living in Rutland, Addison and Washington counties are actively sought. Children with HFA/AD are still being recruited. Please contact, [marie.potvin@uvm.edu](mailto:marie.potvin@uvm.edu) for additional information.
- ⇒ Patty Prelock was trained in More-Than-Words and It Takes 2 to Talk programs this summer. She may offer a parent training in More Than Words in the spring or summer of 2009.
- ⇒ This summer Jim Caffry and his wife attended the Autism Society of America conference.
- ⇒ There is a supported employment training occurring this fall with Mike Chapman from the TEACCH program. Target audience: parents, individuals with ASD, voc counselors, teachers, etc. Allen Curts has also been invited to present in VT related to a program he has been developing about Supported Employment.
- ⇒ Clare McFadden is developing a committee to look at a standardized diagnostic process for ASD in Vermont.

- ⇒ Last Spring the VT legislature gave authorization for spending an additional 2 million dollars (through Medicaid) for children with disability and their family for enhancing screening, providing interventions, and case management.
- ⇒ An application for a grant was done to provide services for students with disability who do not qualify for DD services but need additional support for employment and higher education.
- ⇒ This summer there was a program for children with intensive needs district-wide in East Montpelier. The program was a wonderful experience.
- ⇒ There is an increase in the number of adults with ASD are participating in the self-advocacy movements. Many of these self-advocates attended the national conference in Indianapolis this month.

**ACTION:** ATF members believe many of these updates would be useful to be shared on the ATF website. Stan and Patty will work with Hilary to ensure something gets posted on the website.

### **Membership:**

Our goal is to have 25 members with 40% family members/individuals and 60% professionals. We currently have 19 members including 6 parents. So we need to recruit 6 members & of these 4 should be parents or individuals with ASD.

- ⇒ In January we will ask non active members and active members their intent to continue with participation in ATF
- ⇒ Claudia Pringles will add to the membership list the duration of participation of all members.
- ⇒ In considering membership, consider the potential of bringing to the ATF parents of children and individuals representing the broader autism spectrum
- ⇒ Consider stipend and mileage, although we currently have no budget.
- ⇒ Explore technology for meetings
  
- ⇒ Individuals with ASD
  - 2 individuals are most probably interested: Max Barrows and David Leon (may like to do it together); they may attend with a support person if selected.
  - There is another young adult who is interested in joining or learning more about the ATF. He is a person who is non-verbal who has sensory needs. May not be able to attend every month.
  - In including individuals on the spectrum we need to consider how to support them to fully participate considering their communication, processing and sensory abilities.
  - One proposal is to start with David and Max for 1-year. The chairs would meet with them 15-minutes before the meeting. We may assign an ATF member as a support to them as needed in addition to support person from the outside.
  - *Unanimous vote to accept Max Barrows and David Leon has members of the ATF. Stan will contact them to see if they will accept.*
  
- ⇒ Professional Members:
  - Suggestion that one member be an active special educator working in the field

- We also need to represent the whole state of Vermont
- Decision for Andre Richard was deferred as it is unclear if he still is working in Vermont
- Joy Wilcox reviewed and discussed
- **Motion:** To accept Joy Wilcox .*Unanimous vote to accept Joy Wilcox as a member of the ATF.*

⇒ Parent Members:

- 5 parents have submitted application for membership: Ron Marcellus (Bennington), Katrin Hays (Chittenden), Holly Bettit (Bennington), Terry Holden (Lamoille), and Patty Thompson (Franklin)
- All applicants have been reviewed and discussed.
- **Motion:** Accept Ron Marcellus, Holly Bettie and Terry Holden as members at this time; Ms. Hays and Ms. Thompson are interesting candidates and will be considered when other openings occur => **Motion accepted unanimously.**

⇒ Non-active Members:

- Lisa Lawler – unable to attend meetings b/c of work schedule
- Kate Rogers (active but not attending regularly)
- Laura Weaver (active but not attending regularly)
- Patty reviewed the rules for membership
- **ACTION:** Claudia and Jim will review the membership procedures and bring these to the ATF at the next meeting to review and ensure everyone is clear on active and inactive status.

### **Autism Task Force Focus for 2008-2009:**

- ⇒ Update from Legislative work done last year and next steps including potential roles of ATF.
- ⇒ The ASD Report was published in January 2008. It was broken into an Action Plan by the steering committee and published in June 2008. From this, 7 priorities were identified. These priorities must be approved by the commissioners of health and education and submitted to the legislature before they become public.
- ⇒ Claire and Clare proposed 2 tasks from these priorities that the ATF could undertake this year.
  - Define the competencies for VT professionals working with this population
  - Advocate for Private Insurance to pay of ASD interventions.

### **Brainstorming:**

- Private Insurance
  - Autism Speaks in other states have participated in this
  - What would be the role of ATF in this task
  - Some feel the ATF members could really help around this. Members feel that parents would feel supported by our input. Parents through their Pow Wow meeting have also discussed this need. Need to get Grassroots support to make this happens.

- The legislature might be really ready for this. Need to ensure that the legislature does not see this as a way to decrease general funds to Medicaid.
  - Need to look at studies of impact in other states.
  - Some professionals of the ATF would have conflict of interests but could provide background support.
  - The ATF could develop a framework for this to be accomplished and provide guidance to families.
  - **ACTION:** Jim will email a summary memo of all the legislation around this issue.
- Competencies:
    - This needs to be developed so that expertise can be equitable across the state
    - ATF role could be doing the research and proposing what the competencies could be to Clare and Claire.
    - Consider competencies in the sense of best practice as opposed to licensure/certification
    - Would need to clearly define what we want to accomplish at the onset.
    - For example, SLPs already have national competencies and guidelines for service delivery in ASD as do other groups (e.g., AAP)
    - HEC has already developed competencies for ASD case managers in VT
    - It would be useful for agencies to know what skills need to be taught.
    - How do we put the current professional standard/competencies/best practice knowledge in parents' hands?
    - A first step could be to look at the HEC ASD case manager competencies already developed—we could recommend this as a self evaluation tool for teams to consider what they have and what additional professional development and support they need.
    - **ACTION:** HEC competencies will be attached to the ATF minutes.
    - One way to make the competencies not too large would be to focus on just ASD case managers but across systems, school, mental health, developmental services, etc.
    - Would there be a need for competencies for paraeducators? Should we start with case managers and expand to paraeducators?
    - Could we reproduce the work done in the 90s around special ed. best practices where a checklist was developed and apply it to ASD?
    - Should we address workload as part of the competency work or in addition to the competency work?
    - Workload checklist would be useful both for case manager and related service providers. It could ultimately result in better services for students and families.
    - It would be a value to have a list of core competencies across agencies and systems
    - I.E. specialists in ASD and I.E. service coordinator standards are also needed.
    - How are we defining the ASD specialist across environments and do we need a set of competencies before we can define who this individual should be?

### Proposal

The Group felt that we could work on three tasks this year:

- 1 group to work on “competencies” potentially for case managers (Education, DS & MH) or autism specialists drawing from what is already available (e.g., HEC collaborative ASD competencies) and would expand slowly
  - PARTICIPANTS: Clare, Jessica, Stan, Pascal, Steve
- 1 group to work on private insurance coverage of ASD intervention
  - PARTICIPANTS: Lisa, Claudia, Jim, Angela
- 1 group to work on caseload (workload) issues
  - PARTICIPANTS: Patty, Marie-Christine, Claire, Linda

Other members will determine where they are needed at the next meeting.

### Processing:

- Good turnout and energy
- May have discussed too many details
- We need to just have some time to share our stories or perspectives on issues

### Wellness:

- A story of successful inclusion.

### Next meeting:

October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008

- 9:30-11:00 Committee meeting time: Each group defines their role and reports back
- 11:00-12:30 ATF meeting time

### Agenda Items for next meeting (October 10 at the CHITTENDEN National Bank - next door to CNB):

- Follow-up on inactive members, status of current active members (term limits)
- Autism Institute
- Website and tool kit
- Report back on committee work

### Future Meetings:

- Review TEACCH curriculum
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