

State of Vermont
Autism Task Force Meeting
MINUTES
11-30-07

Task Force Meeting 10:00 am –1:00 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: Claire Bruno, Clare McFadden, Steve Contompasis, Nora Sabo, Angela Timpone, Valerie Walden, Jessica Levi, Tim Fox, Susanne Engels, Linda Chaim, Lisa Lawlor, Lisa Erwin-Davidson, Kate Rogers, Amy Ducker Cohen, Claudia Pringles, Jim Caffry

PRESENT: Stan Baker, Doug Smith, Pascal Cravedi-Cheng, Marie-Christine Potvin, Hilary Melton, Patty Prelock, Linda Mulley

Establish Roles

Facilitator: Stan Baker
Recorder: Patty Prelock
Time Keeper: Marie-Christine Potvin
Rudder Keeper: Pascal Cravedi-Cheng
Equalizer: Pascal Cravedi-Cheng
Processor: Doug Smith
Wellness: Hilary Melton

Introductions

Welcome to one of our new members—Marie-Christine Potvin

Updates from members

Hilary Melton shared several materials with the group

- Partners in Care Conference is December 6, 2007 at the Sheraton
- Brochures “Your next patient has autism. . .” are available
- Holiday movie (“Mr. Magorium’s Wonder Emporium” being sponsored by Essex Cinema at the Outlets for children with special needs and their families on Saturday, Dec. 15 at 9:45 am

Stan Baker & Linda Mulley provided some updates about the Autism Plan Steering Committee & key recommendations that are being made in the report to the Governor:

- A lead agency to make sure everything gets done
- A clearinghouse for information
- Equalizing funding
- For adults, it is recommended that they continue to be eligible for services even if they don’t have a job—right now services only continue following graduation if the individual has a job (even if just a few hours a week)
- Although all believed in a continuum of services, consensus was not reached on a continuum of placements—this topic will be explored further through a public forum

Doug Smith reported that there are now 4 new certified consultants in RDI in VT

Doug Smith—Chittenden

Michelle Fouts—Middlebury

Lisa Marchinkowski- Wallingford

Sue Owking-Brattleboro

A few others are almost ready for their certification

A new treatment effectiveness article has been published & the Toolkit one-pager is being updated.

Stan Baker described a new program, **SUCCEED**, which is a post secondary program to facilitate the successful transition of young adults (ages 18-25 years)

with ASD from home to supported independence through college experiences—including courses in living skills taught by SUCCEED staff—Jen Mitchell-is the senior leader from the Howard Center (Phone: 488-7000) coordinating this effort; Stan has met with Susan Hasazi to create a faculty Steering Committee to support on campus activities for this population; Stan indicated that they are close to confirming a space that would be apartments for up to 6 people; this would be a 2 year program with eventually offering support to 12-18 people

Updates on the 2008 Summer Autism Institute: June 23-27

Speakers-Topics that have been confirmed were reviewed

Mark Sundberg—June 23-24

_____ (open) June 25

Rhea Paul—June 26

Pam Wolfberg—June 27

Possible option for Wednesday June 25

RDI presentation with Doug & other certified colleagues across the state to talk about RDI, the current nuances and updates, and applications for implementation in home and school programs; include families in the full day presentation whose children have benefited & videotapes of children at different stages in the RDI Model

ACTIONS:

- Patty will ask Lisa about highlighting RDI for the Wednesday date
- Doug will ask the other RDI therapists if they are willing to participate as he is willing to do so

Possible workshops for Monday through Thursday from 3:30-5:00

- Bullying
 - **ACTION:** Linda Mulley will ask Jessica Levi for a possible contact to teach this workshop
- Social structured groups for young people with Asperger Syndrome
 - **ACTION:** Stan has agreed to do this one and will determine which date works best for him
- Literacy groups in adults with ASD
 - **ACTION:** Pascal has agreed to do this one and will determine which date works best for him
- Role of Self Advocacy in adults with ASD
 - **ACTION:** Stan will ask Max Barrows, Green Mountain Advocacy Group, if he would be willing to lead this one

ACTION: Stan will talk with Amy Ducker Cohen to see if she would help him to formalize the Summer Institute workshops and get titles, speakers and summaries of the workshops to Patty by January 30 so it can be part of the brochure and placed on appropriate websites

Sunday, June 22, let's continue to offer Autism 101

ACTION: Steve Contompasis , Patty Prelock & Angela Timpone will present for this workshop, 2-5 pm on June 22

Parent Scholarships –to support attendance at the institute must be coordinated

ACTION: Hilary will contact all the parties involved to set up a meeting to define the process for accessing funds and then will share that with those who are writing up the brochure

Finalize Plans for Chairperson Role while Patty is on Sabbatical

Stan Baker & Linda Mulley will share the responsibility of Interim Co-Chairs while Patty is on sabbatical from January through the end of May.

ACTION: Stan & Patty will meet to go over the details of the job

Meeting Dates that Patty will be away include the following:

Jan. 11
Feb. 8
March 14
April 11
May 9

Website Committee Update & Discussion

- Hilary feels that she and Lynn George can continue to manage the website among the two of them; although Lynn is currently out of state she continues to work with Hilary and has been quite helpful in managing the website from PA.
- In the past we have talked about creating a bulletin board—Hilary and Lynn did some investigation and this will not be feasible for the ATF
- We have also talked about a yahoo group to help communication among ATF members; members present felt this was a good idea
 - ACTION:** Hilary will follow-up on establishing a yahoo account for the group
- Questions raised about how to handle responses to e-mails/questions asked by those visiting our website
 - ACTIONS:**
 - ♣ Hilary & Lynn will continue to field the questions asked by those who visit our website
 - ♣ Hilary will send questions that she cannot field to the ATF chair
 - ♣ Questions raised about the TOOLKIT will be sent to the chair of that committee
- Question was raised about available dollars for continued updates of the website
 - ACTION:** Patty will ask Lisa if the ASVT ever received the dollars for Toolkit from AHS; If not, Patty will contact Clare McFadden again and send a reminder to Theresa Wood.
- Other suggestions for the web

ACTION: Hilary and Lynn will add a link on our website to include the for a blog on Structured Teaching that Chris Knippenberg developed; Hilary will e-mail Chris cknippen@valley.net

- Hilary recommended that the Toolkit Documents & efficacy ratings be managed by a separate committee and that the website committee would collaborate with Toolkit committee to get materials on the web.
- Some ideas for additional one pagers were raised, including:
 - Collaboration write up
 - Write up for continuum of placements

ACTIONS:

- ♣ Patty will ask Amy Ducker Cohen if she would be willing to chair the Toolkit Committee with primary responsibility for reviewing toolkit pages, keeping them up to date, determining with the group what pages need to be added, etc.
- ♣ Marie-Christine Potvin has agreed to work with Amy on the committee and is willing to coordinate the efficacy ratings of the interventions
- ♣ Marie-Christine Potvin, Patty Prelock and Chris Knippenberg have been talking about revisions to the ASD/SI brief and Marie-Christine will make some changes & bring them to the larger group for review
- ♣ All members should review the Toolkit pages prior to the next meeting so additions can be considered, etc.
- ♣ Linda Mulley will work on a write up for collaboration
- ♣ Linda Mulley and Clare McFadden will complete the efficacy ratings for TEACCH so this one-pager can be added to the toolkit on the website

Discussion of Issues Related to Determining Adverse Effect

- There were recommendations in the Autism Plan Steering Committee legislative report that the SPED regs need to change to include social skills deficits as part of an adverse effect for individuals with ASD
- Suggestion was that we might try to walk through the regulatory process as a Task Force to address this issue
- We might want to ask Claire Bruno if she can encourage Karin Edwards to attend our February meeting to determine what steps we might take to facilitate a change in the regs
- Question was raised about how might we be able to work with in the system we have since changing the regs will be a long term process and we want to do something now
 - Children with ASD qualify for a 504 plan
 - Social skill support can become a part of a child's 504 plan
 - Less accountability with a 504 than an IEP; not as enforceable as an IEP
 - Usually see a reduction in services with 504
 - If put social skills back into the IEP—will it opens the flood gates for others with social needs (e.g., Emotional Disturbed)

ACTIONS:

Set two tasks in motion:

- Include this as a major discussion item at the February meeting to determine the path the Task Force might want to take to push this issue forward
- Pursue developing guidelines for more effective implementation of the 504 plan to ensure that social skills are addressed for those students who currently don't qualify for an IEP

How do we ensure people have sufficient training to care for children with ASD?

- Should there be certification or endorsement (e.g., autism specialist, autism case managers, etc.)
- If you don't have it, do you lose your job; how do you include those who are currently working with students and working effectively with these students but don't have the endorsement?
- Should we work with the intensive special needs certification—including different levels of autism experience?
- Do we ask for everyone to have some training or do we target some people to have a certain level of training?
- Do we consider a roster concept (registration—certain amount of credits, study, work) that was done when licensing was considered for mental health counselors & psychologists; can also include registered supervisors

Agenda Setting for Next Meeting—January 11, 2008, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 pm

Membership Committee Update & Discussion (Claudia Pringles & Jim Caffry)
(30')

- Current membership needs or requests for membership

- Feedback from Jim about our processes & procedures

Revisit ATF subcommittees

- What are they?
- What do we maintain?
- How do we structure?

Look at meeting times

Looking at TOOLKIT--what needs to be added, updated, etc.

Autism Institute Update

Autism Plan Steering Committee Update

February Meeting Agenda Items

- Continue adverse effect discussion with the hope that Karin Edwards & Claire Bruno can join the discussion
- Continue discussion of pros and cons of certification/registration needs in ASD

Processing

Smaller group so lots of opportunities to process throughout as well as sufficient opportunity to get through the agenda.

Wellness

Hilary Melton shared a Circle of Friends moment with her son, Josh, who is 13 and has a number of friends through his Circle of Friends group; in the past the friends have enjoyed spinning Josh around in a scooter but Josh's physical size has outgrown the scooter they had available; so a couple of his friends in the group are taking a shop class and took it upon themselves to make their shop project to build a larger scooter for Josh.