

## Autism Spectrum Disorder in Alabama

Satellite Conference and Live Webcast  
Thursday, March 3, 2016  
12:00 – 2:00 p.m. Central Time

Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health  
Video Communications and Distance Learning Division

## Introductions

Bama Hager, PhD  
Parent, Program Director  
Autism Society of Alabama (ASA)

Anna McConnell, LCSW, MPH  
State Autism Coordinator  
Alabama Interagency Autism  
Coordinating Council (AIACC)

## Autism Society of Alabama's Mission

To improve services for persons with  
Autism Spectrum Disorders and their  
families through education and advocacy



## Your ASD Students / Families Have a Large Community. They Are Not Alone!


- 1 in 68 are affected
- There are as many as 45,000 individuals affected by ASD in Alabama

## Alabama Autism ID Card

be able to respond to your questions. I may also become physically agitated if you touch me or move too close to me.

Please do not interpret my behavior as refusal to cooperate. I am not intentionally defying your instructions.

(Please see reverse side for additional information) →




## Alabama Autism ID Card

If I exhibit any of these behaviors, I request that you contact the person noted below on my behalf; s/he will confirm my diagnosis and provide information you may need about my identity. Sincerely,

My Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Printed Number \_\_\_\_\_

This certification has been issued by the Alabama Department of Public Health in accordance with Code of Ala. 1875, § 32-6-6.2.  
For more information, visit [adph.org](http://adph.org)



### Did You Know...

- Autism now affects 1 in 68 children and 1 in 42 boys
- Autism prevalence figures are growing
- Autism is one of the fastest-growing developmental disorders in the U.S.
- Autism costs a family \$60,000 a year on average

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/facts-about-autism>

### Did You Know...

- Boys are nearly 5 times more likely than girls to have autism
- There is no medical detection or cure for autism
- Autism does not discriminate against races, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic status

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/facts-about-autism>

### What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

- History of ASD
  - Leo Kanner and Hans Asperger – 1940s
    - Thought it was linked to schizophrenia until 1960s
  - Treatment was focused on medications and institutionalization through 1970s
  - Behavioral therapy treatment became more commonplace in 1980s-1990s

### What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

- 1987 – Autism first recognized in DSM
- TODAY
  - Community and home based treatments that include behavioral, speech, and occupational therapy are standard recommendations

### What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

#### Diagnostic Criteria (DSM 5):

- Deficits in social communication and social interaction
  - Reciprocity
  - Nonverbal communicative behaviors
  - Relationships

### What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

- Restricted, repetitive behaviors
  - Motor movements
  - Routines
  - Fixated interests
  - Sensory

### What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

- Who can diagnose?
  - Psychologist, psychiatrist – Team approach is best (Include Occupational Therapist, Speech / Language Pathologist, and others)

### What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

- What is the typical Recommended Treatment?
  - Behavioral Therapy
  - Speech Therapy
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Others as needed

### Prevalence

Year	Prevalence Rate
1980s	1 in 10,000
1990s	1 in 2500 1 in 1000 1 in 500
2000	1 in 250
2002	1 in 150
2004	1 in 125
2006	1 in 110
2008	1 in 88
2010	1 in 68

### What Does ASD Look Like in Everyday Life?



### What Does ASD Look Like in Alabama?

- Lack of trained and experienced providers
- Lack of payers / insurance coverage
- Loss of jobs / work
- Isolation
- Limited accessibility

### Where do families go for help?



Autism Society of Alabama

- First Responder Trainings throughout Alabama
- Safety Net Campaign
  - ASA assists counties in availability of Project Lifesaver for kids and adults with ASD who wander from safety

### Where do families go for help?

- Annual Camps for families who have a child / adult with ASD
- Alabama Autism Identification Card
  - First ID Card for ASD in the US
- Autism Friendly Campaign
- Sensory Movies throughout Alabama
- Annual Autism Day at the Barons
  - Had 700 attendees this spring

### Where do families go for help?

- Alabama ABLE Act Implementation
  - State savings plan for ASD adult needs
- Conferences for teachers, parents, therapy providers and adults living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- 33 ASA Network Support Groups throughout Alabama led by local parent volunteers

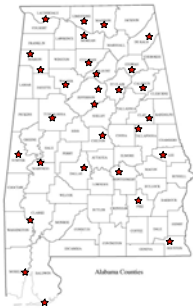
### Where do families go for help?

- Respite Program
  - A break for caretakers / parents
- Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council member
- ASA works with several state agencies
- Annual Legislative Day in Montgomery
- Library Resources in AL Public Libraries



### Networking Groups

Areas Represented:



- Alexander City
- Auburn
- Birmingham
- Blount County
- Calhoun County
- Centerpoint
- Chilton County
- Clarke/Washington Counties
- Cullman County
- Decatur/Hartselle
- DeKalb County
- Demopolis
- Dothan
- Florence
- Gadsden / Etowah County
- Gulf Shores
- Hamilton
- Huntsville
- Limestone County
- Lineville
- Mobile
- Montgomery/Tri-County
- Selma/Dallas County
- St. Clair County
- Sumter County
- Troy
- Tuscaloosa
- Walker County
- Winfield

### Public Health Interactions with ASD Families – Being Autism Friendly

- Ok to approach a family having a hard time
- Safe quiet space in office for melt downs
- Speak in clear unrushed manner
- Convey that you are sensory friendly or available to help families that have challenges
- Fidget toys are nice if available

### Autism Council's Mission Statement

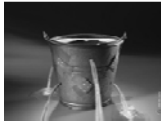


The Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council guides a collaborative effort to facilitate a lifelong system of care and support for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder or associated conditions and their families, so that they may enjoy a meaningful and successful life

### Accessing Services in Alabama

Alabama Department of Education

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services



Alabama Department of Mental Health

Your Personal Funds

### Education

- The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed in 1975 mandating a free and appropriate education for children with disabilities (I.D.E.A.)

### Education Can Provide:

- Child Find:
  - LEA's serving children with disabilities must develop and implement procedures that ensure that all children within their jurisdiction, birth to 21, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who need special education and related services are identified, located and evaluated

### Education Can Provide:

- Child Find (Birth through 2):
  - 1-800-543-3098
- Child Find (3 through 21):
  - 1-800-392-8020

### Education Can Provide:

- Evaluations
  - Public agencies must develop and implement procedures to evaluate those children suspected of having a disability that adversely affects their educational performance and who may need special education (specially designed instruction) and related services

**Education Can Provide:**

- **Early Intervening Services**
  - An LEA may provide early intervening services to students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (with particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) who need an additional academic and behavioral support to be successful in the regular education environment prior to referral for special education

**Education Can Provide:**

- **Special Education**
  - Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability

**Education Can Provide:**

- **Related Services**
  - Generally, related services means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with the disability to benefit from special education, and includes...

**Education Can Provide:**

- Speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including...

**Education Can Provide:**

- Rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes
  - Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training

**Education Can Provide:**

- **Transition Services**
  - Focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of a child with disabilities to facilitate movement from school to post - school activities

### **ADRS - Early Intervention (EI) - Birth to Three**

- How is eligibility for Early Intervention determined?
  - Every child / family is assigned a service coordinator
    - A service coordinator's job is to help the family understand EI
    - She will assure the family's rights are protected

### **ADRS - Early Intervention (EI) - Birth to Three**

- 45 calendar days from the date of referral, the evaluation process must be completed, unless the family is unable to meet this timeline
  - To be eligible for services, the child must have at least a 25% delay in one developmental area or have a diagnosed condition that will result in developmental delay

### **ADRS - Early Intervention (EI) - Birth to Three**

- An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a document that is developed with the parents' participation and input
  - Outcomes (goals) that are functional and age appropriate are developed and the supports / services that are necessary to assist the child and family in meeting these outcomes are included

### **ADRS - Early Intervention (EI) - Birth to Three**

- This document tells the family the frequency and intensity of the supports
  - The caregiver for the child should always be present when services and supports are being provided under Early Intervention

### **ADRS - Early Intervention (EI) - Birth to Three**

- The early intervention provider's role is to provide the caregiver with the abilities to assist the child in achieving the IFSP outcomes
  - Service and supports provided under Early Intervention are designed to assist the child and family achieve the IFSP outcomes

### **ADRS - Early Intervention (EI) - Birth to Three**

- Our services are NOT meant to replace services that are similar but are medical in nature

### **ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- This network provides specialty clinic and other services by physicians, nurses, social workers, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, occupational therapists, registered dietitians, secretaries, and administrators

### **ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- CRS staff members also work closely with local school systems to enable children with special health care needs to participate fully in school

### **ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- Through services such as counseling, specialized therapy, and assistive technology for children and families, as well as disability training for teachers and other school staff, CRS offers the support vital to classroom success

### **ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- Are CRS services just for low-income families?
  - CRS serves any child in Alabama between the ages of birth and 21 years of age with a special health care need
  - Children and youth of all income levels may receive services

### **ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- Families who are able to do so are asked to participate financially in their child's care
- The amount of their participation is based on a sliding fee schedule

### **ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- How to Apply for CRS services
- Complete these forms on the ADRS website:
  - Billing Information form
  - Client and Family Rights form
  - Client-family Information form
  - Consent form
  - Medical History Information form



**ADRS - Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS) - Birth to 21**

- Medical-dental Provider Information form
- Declaration of Citizenship and Lawful Presence

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) places substantial emphasis on assisting youth with disabilities in the transition from school to post school activities
- Transition services are a coordinated set of activities that lead to employment

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- A vocational rehabilitation counselor works with youth and their families to assess their needs and plan individualized services to meet their chosen vocational goal
- Every public high school in Alabama has a vocational rehabilitation counselor assigned to provide transition services

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- For more information about transition services, contact Karen Jenkins at 1-800-441-7607 or (TTY) 800-499-1816

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- Assistive technology / accommodations
- Career exploration
- College preparation
- Financial assistance
- Job coaching
- Job placement and retention
- Job readiness training

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- Personal work adjustment
- Post-employment services
- Social skills training
- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Vocational needs assessments
- Other rehabilitation services based on individual need

### **ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)
- Disability Mentoring Day
- Learning Disabilities Project
- Project Search
- Prison Transition Initiative
- School - based Jointly Funded Job

### **ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Transition Services**

- Summer Employment Program
- Supported
- Teen Transition
- Transition Day

### **ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Adults**

- Eligibility:
  - Documentation of Developmental Disability completed in past 3 years
- How to access:
  - Contact local office (on website)
  - Counselor assigned by zip code
  - Consumer choice

### **ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Adults**

- The types of services available through VRS are as varied as the people it serves and are designed specifically to meet the needs of each individual

### **ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Adults**

- Available through any of the 20 VRS offices statewide, services can include educational services; vocational assessment, evaluation and counseling; job training; assistive technology; orientation and mobility training; and job placement

### **ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Adults**

- To be eligible for VRS services, individuals must have a physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment and must be able to benefit from services in terms of going to work

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Employment Services**

- **STEPS**
  - Person does not qualify for “supported employment”
  - Person will not receive job coaching or long term support

**ADRS - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) - Employment Services**

- **Milestones**
  - ADRS’ Supported Employment Program
  - Person must qualify
  - Job Coaching included
  - Long term support included for the life of the job

**Mental Health – DD Community Services**

- Region I Community Services
  - Pat Caldwell, Director
  - Phone: (256) 552-3720

**Mental Health – DD Community Services**

- Counties:

Cullman	Dekalb	Etowah
Madison	Marshall	Jackson
Morgan	Lawrence	Limestone
Lauderdale	Franklin	Colbert
Cherokee		

**Mental Health – DD Community Services**

- Region II Community Services
  - Barbara Huguley, Director
  - Phone: (205) 247-3156

**Mental Health – DD Community Services**

- Counties:

Marion	Winston	Walker
Lamar	Fayette	Tuscaloosa
Pickens	Greene	Hale
Sumter	Marengo	Choctaw
Bibb		

**Mental Health –  
DD Community Services**

- **Region III Community Services**
  - Eleanor Tolbert, Director
  - Phone: (251) 478-2760

**Mental Health –  
DD Community Services**

- **Counties:**

Perry	Dallas	Wilcox
Clarke	Monroe	Conecuh
Washington	Mobile	Escambia
Baldwin		

**Mental Health –  
DD Community Services**

- **Region IV Community Services**
  - Beverly Hudson, Interim Director
  - Phone: (334) 514-4300

**Mental Health –  
DD Community Services**

- **Counties:**

Autauga	Elmore	Tallapoosa
Chambers	Lee	Houston
Lowndes	Montgomery	Macon
Russell	Bullock	Barbour
Butler	Crenshaw	Pike
Covington	Coffee	Dale
Henry	Geneva	

**Mental Health –  
DD Community Services**

- **Region V Community Services**
  - TBA, Director (Ziva Hatcher)
  - Phone: (205) 916-0400

**Mental Health –  
DD Community Services**

- **Counties:**

Blount	Jefferson	St. Clair
Calhoun	Talladega	Clay
Claiborne	Randolph	Shelby
Chilton	Coosa	

**Mental Health**

- The prevalence of autism is increasing
- For adults with developmental disabilities, services are funded mainly through Medicaid- Home and Community Based Waiver program
- The waiver is funded for only a limited number of eligible individuals
  - States have long waiting lists of those needing services
- There is a need for specifically trained staff, experienced in autism

**Mental Health - 310 Agency / Community Service Office**

- The designated 310 Agency for each county / area shall serve as the point of entry for waiver applications
- The designated 310 Agency will collect the necessary documentation and file the application with the Regional Community Service Office

**Mental Health - 310 Agency / Community Service Office**

- The Community Service Office will determine eligibility and process the waiver application

**Mental Health - 310 Agency / Community Service Office**

**How to Complete an Application**

- Those seeking services for persons with intellectual disabilities through the Alabama Department of Mental Health should:
  1. Contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities Call Center at: 1-800-361-4491

**Mental Health - 310 Agency / Community Service Office**

2. Within the next business day, an initial contact form will be faxed to the local designated 310 agency (case management agency) or other designated point of entry
3. Once contacted by the 310 agency, you will need to do the following:

**Mental Health - 310 Agency / Community Service Office**

- A. Describe the needs and preferences of the applicant (Person for whom services are being requested)
- B. Provide information on the applicant's current situation
  - Personal and family history, and Medicaid eligibility status

**Mental Health - 310 Agency /  
Community Service Office**

4. Additional information to be completed by the designated 310 agency:
- Criticality summary completed within 90 days of application;
  - A psychological evaluation with the IQ range of the applicant (IQ score below 70 documented by a standardized intelligence test) including a review of all past intellectual assessments and IQ scores;

**Mental Health - 310 Agency /  
Community Service Office**

- Documentation that the applicant has challenges with adaptive functioning (significant limitations in the applicant's effectiveness in meeting the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence, and/or social responsibility that are expected for his/her age level and cultural group, as determined by clinical assessment, and usually, standardized scales)

**Mental Health - 310 Agency /  
Community Service Office**

- Such as the ICAP (Inventory for Client and Agency Planning);
- When there is cause to question the ICAP score, an additional clinical adaptive functioning assessment and other documentation may be requested;

**Mental Health - 310 Agency /  
Community Service Office**

- Documentation that the applicant's level of adaptive and intellectual functioning occurred prior to the age of 18 (developmental history)

**Mental Health - 310 Agency /  
Community Service Office**

5. The 310 agency will submit the completed informational packet for review to the regional community services office that serves the applicant's county and, if approved, the applicant's name will be placed on the waiting list

**Mental Health - 310 Agency /  
Community Service Office**

- ADMH will make a determination of eligibility within 30 days of the receipt of the completed application
  - *Note: the date of application, is the day a completed packet is received at the regional community services office*

### **Mental Health - Definitions**

- **Designated 310 Agency** - The agency designated by DMH/DD in each county or group of counties responsible for submitting applications and information regarding individuals waiting for services

### **Mental Health - Definitions**

- **ICAP (Inventory for Client and Agency Planning)** - The standard functional assessment instrument for determining eligibility for the waiver programs. This commercial product will produce a three-page summary report known as the Compuscore

### **Mental Health - Definitions**

- **Criticality Summary** - The assessment tool created by the Department to evaluate the criticality of a person's need for services
  - The assessment is to be conducted by case managers with the designated 310 Agency, then submitted to the Department for scoring

### **Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- Applicants contact the designated 310
- The 310 case manager administers an ICAP and completes a Criticality Summary, and provides other information if needed
- The 310 Agency submits the application to the community service office

### **Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- The community service office determines eligibility
- All eligible applicants for the Waiver are added to the statewide waiting list

### **Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- The waiting list is sorted by criticality summary score and length of time on the waiting list, and a rank (1-10) is established for each person, with 1 being the highest need
- Rank is reassessed weekly for changing conditions and new applicants

**Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- New funding for the waiting list is allocated to the highest priority needs, statewide
- Funded vacancies are filled with applicants with the highest priority need

**Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- Once the 310 agency has provided a complete application to the regional community services office, the division will make a determination of eligibility no later than 30 business days after receipt
  - *Note: If the application has to be sent back to the 310 agency for more information, it is not considered complete*

**Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- If the applicant is determined eligible, his/her name will be added to the waiting list
  - The applicant will receive a memorandum (an Initial Notification of Preliminary Determination of Eligibility) from the division stating they have been added to the waiting list indicating the service groups for which the applicant is shown to be waiting

**Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- This notification will also explain how the waiting list works

**Mental Health - DD Statewide Waiting List**

- The Alabama Department of Mental Health at: [www.mh.alabama.gov](http://www.mh.alabama.gov)
- “The easiest way to find the services you need in the Alabama Mental Health system is to call our 24-hour referral line at 1-800-367-0955”
- Office of Rights Protection and Advocacy Call Center 1-800-361-4491 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday

**Your Funds**

**Alabama Family Trust**

- We are a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) special needs trust serving children and adults with disabilities



**Your Funds**

- Our organization was created in 1994 by an act of the Alabama Legislature to encourage, enhance and foster the provisions of medical, social or other supplemental services for persons with a mental or physical impairment
- [www.alabamafamilytrust.com](http://www.alabamafamilytrust.com)

**Your Funds**

- Special Needs Trust**
- A special needs trust is a trust designed for beneficiaries who have a disability

**Your Funds**

- It is written so the beneficiary can enjoy the use of property that is held in the trust for his or her benefit, while at the same time allowing the beneficiary to receive essential needs-based government benefits
- Special needs trusts are sometimes known as supplemental needs trusts in the United States

**Your Funds**

- ABLE Act**
- Under current rules, many individuals with disabilities can have no more than \$2,000 in assets in order to qualify for needed government benefits. The ABLE Act would dramatically alter that scenario, allowing people with disabilities to establish special accounts at any financial institution where they could save up to \$14,000 annually under current gift-tax limitations.

**Your Funds**

- The accounts could accrue \$100,000 without jeopardizing eligibility for Social Security and other government programs. Meanwhile, the legislation ensures that those with disabilities can retain Medicaid coverage no matter their ABLE account balance

**Your Funds**

- Funds deposited in the proposed accounts could be used to pay for education, health care, transportation, housing and other expenses. Much like 529 college savings plans, interest earned on savings in the accounts would be tax-free
- Contact Katherine Barr, [kbarr@sirrote.com](mailto:kbarr@sirrote.com), 205-930-5147

**Considerations for Transition: Areas in Which Individuals May Need Support**

- Personal care
- Cleaning and laundry
- Grocery shopping
- Nutrition and cooking skills
- Transportation
- Housing / living arrangements
- Money management / Budgeting

**Considerations for Transition: Areas in Which Individuals May Need Support**

- Medication management
- Socialization
- Relationships / Social cues
- Community Membership
- Hobbies and recreation
- Addressing health needs
- Advocacy

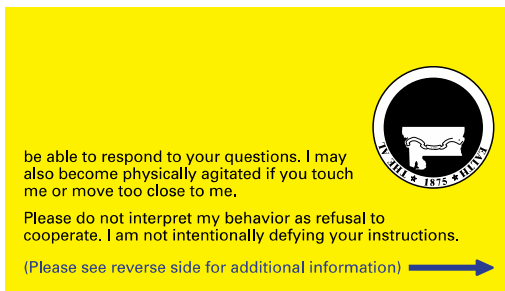
**Considerations for Transition: Areas in Which Individuals May Need Support**

- Oversight / coordination / long term planning
- Guardianship

**Alabama Department of Public Health**

- Autism ID Card
- Emergency Preparedness Training
- Participation in Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council and other partnerships

**Alabama Autism ID Card**



be able to respond to your questions. I may also become physically agitated if you touch me or move too close to me.

Please do not interpret my behavior as refusal to cooperate. I am not intentionally defying your instructions.

(Please see reverse side for additional information) →

**Alabama Autism ID Card**

If I exhibit any of these behaviors, I request that you contact the person noted below on my behalf; s/he will confirm my diagnosis and provide information you may need about my identity. Sincerely,

My Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Critical Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Critical Printed Number \_\_\_\_\_

This certification has been issued by the Alabama Department of Public Health in accordance with Code of Ala. 1975, § 32-6-6.2. For more information, visit [adph.org](http://adph.org)

### What Do Services Look Like in Other States?

- Insurance
- Service providers
- In home support
- ADPH – registry; bureau, etc.

**SPHARC**

State Public Health Autism Resource Center

- <http://www.amchp.org/programsandtopics/CYSHCN/projects/spharc/Pages/default.aspx>

### Getting Autism Services - Recap

- 0-2 years of age – Early Intervention  
– 1-800-543-3098
- 3-21 years of age – Educational Services  
– 1-800-392-8020  
– IEP and 504 Plan

### Getting Autism Services - Recap

- Transition services – Should begin by 16 years of age
- 21+ years of age - Vocational Rehabilitation

### Looking Forward: Autism Initiatives in Alabama



- Please let us help you and the families you serve

[www.autism-alabama.org](http://www.autism-alabama.org)

1 - 877- 4AUTISM

Jerry ASA / Autism Society of Alabama

@AutismSocietyAL

### Looking Forward: Autism Initiatives in Alabama



### Goals / Committees

1. Accountability
  - Promote evidence-based, high quality, cost effective models and best practices that provide supports to persons with ASD and their families
  - National Standards Report – Phase 2 (what interventions have most evidence and for what ages are most appropriate), Research review

### Goals / Committees

**2. Public Awareness**

- Raise public awareness of issues affecting persons with ASD and their families
  - Autism Friendly, First Responders/Safety, *Learn the Signs. Act Early*

### Goals / Committees

**3. Funding**

- Identify and promote opportunities for diversified public and private partnerships that expand needed funding.
  - Regional Autism Centers, Insurance, Medicaid Reform, EPSDT

### Goals / Committees

**4. Accessibility**

- Advocate for increased choice among and access to quality services and supports for people with ASD and their families
  - Trained person at VR who knows ASD, training NG leaders on resources to share with others

### Goals / Committees

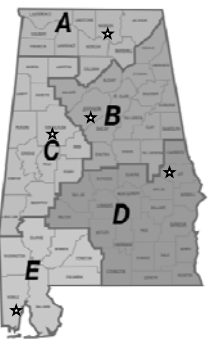
**5. Regional Networks**

- Develop and coordinate necessary resources that allow for the creation of Regional Autism Networks
  - Needs funding, Regional Autism Assessments in process

### Proposed Regional Autism Centers

*Uses proposed regions in Regional Care Organization Map from AL Medicaid*

- Region A – University of Alabama in Huntsville
- Region B – University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Region C – University of Alabama
- Region D – Auburn University
- Region E – University of South Alabama



### Regional Autism Networks

- (d) Each center shall provide the following:
  - (1) A staff that has expertise in autism and related disabilities.
  - (2) Individual and direct family assistance in the home, community, and school. A center's assistance may not supplant other responsibilities of state and local agencies, and each school district shall be responsible for providing an appropriate education program for clients of a center who are school age, inclusive of preschool special education.

### Regional Autism Networks

- (3) Technical assistance and consultation services, including specific intervention and assistance for a client of the center, the family of the client, and the school district, and any other services that are appropriate.
- (4) Professional training programs that include developing, providing, and evaluating preservice and inservice training in state-of-the-art practices for personnel who work with the populations served by the centers and their families.

### Regional Autism Networks

- (5) Public education programs to increase awareness of the public about autism and autistic-related disabilities.

(Act 2009-592)

### What Can You Do to Help?

- Refer!
  - To ASA, AIACC, and other service providers previously discussed

### What Can You Do to Help?

- Remember!
  - OK To Approach a Family Having a Hard Time
  - Safe quiet space in office for Melt Downs
  - Speak in clear unrushed manner
  - Convey that you are sensory friendly or available to help families that have challenges
  - Fidget toys are nice if available

### Contact

Bama Hager  
 bamah@autism-alabama.org  
 www.autism-alabama.org  
 1 - 877 - 4 AUTISM

Anna McConnell  
 Anna.McConnell@mh.alabama.gov  
 www.autism.alabama.gov  
 (205) 478 - 3402

### References

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**Questions?**