

Center for Autism and Related Disabilities

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES / DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

VOL. 5, 1 JANUARY 2008



Events

January

- 1.30 Parent Education Series
Session 1
WSWHE BOCES, Saratoga
Springs 6pm-8pm
- 1.30 First Responder's Training
East Greenbush Public
Library, 6pm-8:30pm
- 1.31 CARD's 2nd Annual
Open House
4pm-8pm

February

- 2.6 Parent Education Series
Session 2
WSWHE BOCES, 6pm-8pm
- 2.7 Make and Take Workshop
The Courtyard Marriott,
Saratoga Springs, 10am-6pm

March

- 3.5 Parent Education Series
Session 3
WSWHE BOCES, 6pm-8pm
- 3.6 Professional Development
and Parent Seminar
An Introduction to Positive
Behavior Support for
Students with Autism
Spectrum Disorders
Cobleskill, 1pm-3pm
& 6pm-8pm
- 3.13 Make and Take Workshop
Poughkeepsie, 10am-6pm

April

Autism Awareness Month

- 4.4 2nd Annual Statewide
Conference
Rochester, NY
- 4.23 Parent Seminar with
Anthony Malone, M.D.,
The Desmond Hotel and
Conference Center, 6pm-8pm
- 4.24 Medical Professional
Seminar with Anthony
Malone, M.D.
(for medical professionals)
The Desmond Hotel and
Conference Center,
6pm-8pm

CARD's 6th Annual Conference

Improving Educational Outcomes for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

CARD-Albany hosted its 6th annual conference, Improving Educational Outcomes for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, on Friday, October 19, 2007 at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany, NY. Over 500 parents and professionals participated in a keynote address and a number of different breakout sessions provided by nationally recognized speakers within the field of autism and related disabilities.

This year's keynote address was given by Brenda Smith-Myles, Ph.D. from the University of Kansas. Dr. Smith-Myles is the Chief of Programs and Development of the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence and an associate professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas where she co-directs a graduate program in Asperger Syndrome and autism. The recipient of the 2004 Autism Society of America's Outstanding Professional Award and the 2006 Princeton Fellow-

ship Award, she has written numerous articles and books on Asperger Syndrome and autism including, *Asperger Syndrome and Adolescence: Practical Solutions for School Success* (with Adreon), the winner of the Autism Society of America's Outstanding Literary Work. Dr. Smith-Myles discussed the hidden curriculum, or the unstated social rules that govern much of human behavior, and the importance of building skills in this area for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

Breakout sessions at this year's conference covered a range of topics, including supporting students with challenging behavior, self-help skills for individuals with autism, communication and social skill interventions for students with autism, and utilizing technology to support student learning.

Thanks to the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center and the Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza for helping make the conference a great success.

Book Reviews

Self-Help Skills for People with Autism: A Systematic Teaching Approach (Woodbine House) by Stephen R. Anderson, Ph.D., BCBA, Amy L. Jablonski, Psy.D., Marcus L. Thomeer, Ph.D., and Vicki Madaus Knapp, Ph.D., BCBA addresses key skills that are essential for children's independence and participation in home, school, and community. The authors, all from Summit Educational Resources in the Buffalo, New York area, comprehensively and concisely, provide practical advice both parents and professionals can use to teach skills such as dressing, personal hygiene, eating, and toileting. The book gives some background on autism spectrum disorders, guides readers on how to determine which skills to teach and why teaching self-help skills should be emphasized, provides motivation techniques, and explains why data collection is vital in evaluating progress. It is never too early to teach self-help skills to children, and this book does an outstanding job in showing you how to do it.

Brenda Smith Myles, the keynote speaker at our 6th Annual Conference, and Melissa L. Trautman and Ronda L. Schelvan are the authors of *The Hidden Curriculum: Practical Solutions for Understanding Unstated Rules in Social Situations* (Autism Asperger Publishing Company). The "hidden curriculum" is a set of rules or guidelines that are often not directly taught but are assumed to be known. People with autism spectrum disorders often have a difficult time "picking up" these skills, and this book helps with making sense of these unspoken rules and expectations needed in social situations. Learning these skills can impact people's lives socially, emotionally, behaviorally, recreationally, and vocationally. Curriculum items such as airplane trips, birthday parties, bathroom rules, and figurative speech and idioms are included. This book is so useful, it immediately sold out at the book fair during the conference!

Statewide Initiative

Increasing Capacity of School Teams to Reduce Challenging Behavior in Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Problem behaviors of children with autism spectrum disorders are among the most challenging and stressful issues faced by school personnel and parents in their efforts to provide appropriate educational programs.

To address this area of concern, CARD-Albany has developed two different training programs that each focus on using positive behavior supports to reduce challenging behavior:

1. Skill Building Workshops, which provide district-wide school teams with the knowledge and skills needed to utilize positive behavior supports, based on a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), to reduce problem behaviors. The workshop series consists of 5 separate sessions which take place over a 3-month period. Each workshop contains both training and technical assistance components. For more information on this project, or to complete an application for your school team, visit the CARD-Albany website at www.albany.edu/psy/autism

2. Professional Development/Parent Seminars, which provide information to school personnel and parents on how to intervene with behavior problems using positive approaches. Seminars are 2.5 hours in length and contain both lecture and interactive components. To facilitate application of the principles and strategies learned during the seminar to school or home, participants receive a workbook on positive behavior support to take with them. For more information on this project, or to see a complete list of dates, times, and locations of currently scheduled seminars, visit the CARD-Albany website at www.albany.edu/psy/autism

Summer Fun and Family Barbeque

2007 marked the fourth summer that CARD Albany has offered its "Summer Fun" program. Children registered with CARD were able to choose from six activities across the greater Capital District. The children and staff had a great time seeing animals and going on a safari, taking a stroll through the 18th century, riding ferris wheels and roller-coasters, checking out military aircrafts, exploring the world of science, and descending

below ground for a cavern adventure. The fun took place at The Adirondack Animal Land, Fort William Henry, Hoffman's Playland, Empire State Aerosciences Museum, Children's Museum of Science and Technology, and Howe Caverns.

On August 19th, CARD hosted a family bbq at The Crossings Park in Colonie. The Old Daley Inn catered the bbq, which included hamburgers, hot dogs, corn on the

cob, potato salad, and delicious brownies and cookies. It was a nice opportunity for families to socialize with each other and with CARD staff. The children also had a fun time on the playground next to the pavilion.

Thank you to all who participated! We look forward to another great summer next year!

CARD Halloween Party

Ghosties and ghoulies were on parade at the 4th Annual CARD Halloween Party held at the Verdooy Volunteer Firehouse in Latham, New York on October 26, 2007. More than 25 children along with their families and CARD staff came dressed in costume to enjoy food and fun. The trick-or-treaters enjoyed playing Ghost Bingo, Pin-the-Tail-on-the-Cat, Pumpkin Toss, Halloween Scavenger Hunt, and Pass the Pumpkin. Party-goers

had a chance to paint pumpkins, decorate their own trick or treat bags, create masks, and enjoy wonderful snacks which included making their own sundaes! The evening concluded with a frighteningly fun Costume Parade. Price Chopper, TGI Fridays, and Stewarts were among the local businesses providing donations for this event. Thanks to everyone who came and helped make this event great fun.

Holiday Party '07

On December 1, 2007 over 175 children and their family members gathered to celebrate the holidays with CARD. A delicious brunch was served at the Desmond Hotel before a very special guest made his appearance...Santa! The children were busy making holiday and winter crafts, watching movies, decorating gingerbread people, and, of course, letting Santa know what is on their list this year.

Statewide Conference Agenda

Friday, April 4, 2008

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Rochester, NY

7:45 to 8:45	Registration and Continental Breakfast	
8:45 to 9:00	Welcoming Remarks	
9:00 to 10:30	Keynote Presentation	
	Phillip S. Strain, Ph.D. Quality Inclusion for Young Children with Autism*	1.50 Contact Hours
10:30 to 10:45	Break	
10:45 to 12:00	Breakout Session 1	
	Newer Models for Serving Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders * Presenter: Shirley Cohen, Ph.D.	
	Thinking in PBS: Approaching Problem Behavior Through the Lens of PBS* Presenter: Christopher M. Oliva, Ph.D.	
	FBA's and BIP's: Individualized Behavioral Supports for Students with Autism* Presenter: Daniel Crimmins, Ph.D.	
	Self-Determination for Individuals with Severe Disabilities and Problem Behavior * Presenter: Fredda Brown, Ph.D.	1.25 Contact Hours
12:00 to 12:45	Buffet Lunch	
1:00 to 2:15	Breakout Session 2	
	Using Visual Supports to Enhance Learning in Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders* Presenter: Kristin V. Christodulu, Ph.D.	
	Systematically Addressing Behavioral Excesses: A Functional Model* Presenter: Raymond G. Romanczyk, Ph.D., BCBA and Emily Huber Callahan, MS	
	The Genomics of Autism: Current Findings and Clinical Implications Presenter: Michael Cuccaro, Ph.D.	
	Promoting Abstract and Social Language in Children with Autism* Presenter: Joanne Gerenser, Ph.D., CCC-SLP	1.25 Contact Hours
2:15 to 2:30	Refreshment Break	
2:30 to 3:45	Breakout Session 3	
	A Video Guide to Early Symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Young Children* Presenter: Patricia Towle, Ph.D.	
	Psychiatric Co-Morbidity in Autism Spectrum Disorders: Issues and Considerations in Assessment & Treatment* Presenter: Caroline I. Magyar, Ph.D.	
	Integrating Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders into our Schools – A System Wide Approach* Presenters: Marcus Thomeer, Ph.D., David Meichenbaum, Ph.D., Chris Lopata, Ph.D. & Stephen Anderson, Ph.D.	
	Positive Behavioral Supports at Home: Strategies for Parents Presenter: Daniel Crimmins, Ph.D.	1.25 Contact Hours

To receive a conference brochure, please call 866-442-2574 or visit our website for more information:
www.albany.edu/psy/autism/autism.html

*This session is approved for NASP contact hours

Other News...

Regional Advisory Councils

Meetings of the CARD-Albany Regional Advisory Councils took place this fall in Saratoga, Hudson, Johnstown, and Albany. Each council is chaired by a member of the community it represents, and school personnel, parents, and community members recruited for the regional councils represent varied settings (i.e., urban, suburban, rural) as well as diverse backgrounds. Eleven new members joined the four councils this year. Additional information on the regional advisory councils can be found on the CARD-Albany website at www.albany.edu/psy/autism

Positive Family Intervention Project

Is your child between the ages of 3 & 5 and experiencing significant behavior problems (tantrums, aggression, self-injury)? If your child meets these criteria and has an identified developmental disability, he or she may be eligible for the Positive Family Intervention Project, which is a parent education program designed to improve children's behavior. Participating parents attend weekly sessions with a trained therapist and learn about positive behavior support, which is a research-based approach to dealing with challenging behavior. Parents learn to better understand the purpose of their child's behavior and how to deal with it more positively and effectively. This program is a wonderful

opportunity for parents to receive personal and individualized assistance from experts in the field. The program is very effective — to date, every family that has participated has seen a reduction in challenging behaviors. We are currently looking for interested families to participate. If you would like more information about the program, please contact Lindsay Washington at (518) 442-2574.

Sibling and Parent Workshop

Parents and siblings of children with autism spectrum disorders attended an exciting and informative workshop on August 6, 2007. The program was designed to improve and facilitate communication between parents and siblings. Parents participated in discussions regarding topics such as sibling embarrassment, family stress, and acceptance while siblings took part in games and fun activities with each other. Highlights of the sibling portion included making ice cream sundaes with a partner and sharing thoughts about what it means to have a sibling with an autism spectrum disorder. Siblings also completed crossword puzzles and played a special version of Jeopardy. CARD staff had a wonderful time working with all participants and thank them for their involvement. We hope you have experienced improvements in communication in your family!

Disability Awareness

CARD is currently looking for schools and classrooms interested in participating in a Disability Awareness program that is being developed. Please contact Lindsay Washington at (518) 442-2574 for more information.



For More Information

PH: 518-442-2574

FX: 518-442-4834

EMAIL: card@albany.edu

www.albany.edu/psy/autism



Address Service Requested

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Psychology
1535 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203

