**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2019-2021**

**AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**Autism Workgroup**

**Autism Planning for the Future**

Autism Workgroup, Co-chaired by Mary-Graham McDowell, Community Care Network, Rutland & Cheryle Wilcox, DMH

Autism touches many of our lives. Approximately one in 59 children in the United States are diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Medicaid funding for autism related services is primarily channeled through the Designated Agencies. There are also a few private providers supporting children with autism in Vermont. The services are family-centered and require significant training and high levels of supervision. As a state, we have much more work to do to build our system of supports related to autism.

To address and highlight these needs, in November 2015, a group of community and state stakeholders started coming together to ask the following: **How do we use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont**?

This group is building on the work that was done by the previous Autism Plan Advisory Committee and the Vermont State Autism Plan. Every other month a diverse group of family members, state staff, and community partners come together to talk about gaps, issues and to highlight examples of exemplary work. The group is focusing on three goals identified by this workgroup.

**Purpose of Autism Workgroup: This workgroup convenes to use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont**

**Strategic Plan**

| **Goal** | **Key Initiatives and Strategies** | **How are we going to measure our success? Timeline?**  | **Deliverables** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Have a comprehensive view of the resources collectively across the state for children, youth and their families.**  | 1. **Gather information from caregivers about their experience with providers**
2. **Collect Data and Information from the following:**
	1. **EDUCATION**
		1. Will AOE census-based funding impact delivery of autism services?
		2. Survey schools to gather more information
			1. Number of children on IEPs in schools with an ASD.
			2. Number of children on 504
			3. Survey schools to describe autism services.
			4. Maybe offer a grid with a range of supports and services to check off and then ask if they check yes what that looks like.
			5. We want to partner with AOE so we can get a picture in Vermont of where we have things working well, are there areas where we have gaps.
			6. Could we use our Local Interagency Teams to coordinate this effort and they can connect with their local special educator who sits on their LIT.
	2. **MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK**
	3. **PRIVATE PROVIDERS**
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| **2. Understand and Address the needs of older Adolescents with Autism** | 1. Need for multi-disciplinary training for mental health and vocational providers.
2. Increase access, capacity, training and standardization of services.
3. Explore better/new options for diagnosis and delivery of services for late adolescence and young adulthood.
 | * This is not something this group has tackled and the transition aged time is very difficult in what’s offered.
* Should this be a subcommittee to look at?
* Would like transition to feel more like a seamless system going from school-aged to adulthood.
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| **3. Deliver Family-Centered Care** | 1. Challenge and advise the system to identify and implement creative, collaborative, and flexible strategies to meet family’s needs (transportation, training) across all systems
2. Identify other evidence-informed options to meet the needs of more families and ways to fund them (ex. ESDM not just ABA and consultants to child care programs because not every families wants or can access ABA or clinics/center-based care)
3. Support funding for training for increasing practitioners of the models identified in #2 above.
 | * Need to find the families and talk to them
* Hearing and sharing about other evidence-based practices – hear about PT/OT supports –services that Vermont allows for
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