

**AHS Integration Efforts
Autism Planning for the Future**

Date: Wednesday, May 8, 2024

2:00-3:00

Facilitator: Cheryle Wilcox

Notetaker: Molly Bumpas

Present: Regie Cooper, Jen LaGro, Mallory James, Kara Hurwitch, Michael Hoffnung, Cortney Keene, Cammie Naylor, Amy Murphy, Margaret Fix, Sefakor-Komabu Pomeyie, Catherine Armani Munn, Laurie Mulhern, Rya Hardee Fauth

Overall Goal of our work group: This workgroup convenes to use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont.

Strategic Plan Goals:

- A. To challenge and advise the current system to identify creative, collaborative, and flexible strategies to deliver family-centered care throughout a child's journey from early identification and diagnosis through adult services.
- B. Increase access to assessments, supports and services up and through transition to adulthood.
- C. Educate community about inclusion and neurodiversity.

Notes

Group Updates.

Philip Eller, Chair, Vermont Autism Task Force: *It is with a sad and regretful heart that I, as last chair of the VATF, wish to notify you and all the others on the ASD Work Group, and then indirectly with other providers and parents and relatives of all those with ASD in Vermont of the closing of the work of the Autism Task Force. For 25 years or so it has provided a voice and a forum for education of the citizens of Vermont about the autism spectrum issue and the needs of its people as well as a voice of advocacy in many activities over these years. These efforts have included working for legislation addressing the needs of those with this life-long challenge, sponsored annual Autism Day at the Statehouse, a valuable website and Facebook presence, monitoring and advocating at various state committees and statewide groups, and many other ways. But, we sign off with the positive assurance of the many services and programs that have developed over the past 20 or so years for the autism population that have and will continue to fulfill the original mission of the Autism Task Force. We wish you all well in this work.*

Notes

Amy Murphy, Early Intervention AOE: Impact report will be distributed in June addressing work's impact on families, educators, directors of programs, etc. Have incorporated MTSS/Pyramid Model framework in social-emotional skills to promote best practices.

Cheryle Wilcox, DMH: Preschool Development Grant available (\$500,000/year for the next three years) can be used for work targeting children 0-8 years old by community providers, designated agencies, parent child centers, programs, private practitioners, etc to provide training/consultation with childcare sites for children with trauma background or behaviors due to developmental differences. Grant could also be used to educate parents/caregivers when waiting for a developmental assessment.

Cortney Keene, Keene Perspectives: Early intervention clinic in White River Junction has hired 2 new BCBAs who will start in June. This will allow KP to support their entire waitlist at the moment.

Catherine Armani Munn, OT BSD: In Burlington Early Education program, they are seeing a trend of pediatricians referring children to Bounce ABA once get an Autism diagnosis. Families, due to transportation and child care needs, choose Bounce due to more hours/transportation offered. Unfortunately, this creates a situation where children do not get school related service providers of special education, SLP, OT, PT, etc. Discussion of this issue across districts and differences in what is offered to children in ABA clinics depending on the school district.

Rya Hardee Fauth, Howard Center ASP: Rya is officially Director of the program after the departure of Julie Smith. A new position, Clinical Director, will be filled by Christina Vetter, BCBA with HC ASP for over a decade.

Review Resource List and Discuss

Reviewed current list for updates. Idea of added category of Social Groups. Also to add description for each category.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Next Meeting on zoom: June 12th (Wednesday) 2:00-3:00
- Special guest: Hannah Markos – Director of Vermont Higher Ed Collaborative's new certificate program in Neurodiversity and Inclusion.