

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

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

1:00-2:00

Facilitator: Cheryle Wilcox

Notetaker: Molly Bumpas

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.

Agenda Item
Introductions: Molly Bumpas, Cheryle Wilcox, Danielle Briar, Julie Smith, Emily Dischino, Cammie Naylor, Jenn Johnson, Danielle Cohen, Alyssa Heilburn, Jeremiah Dickerson, Laurie Mulhern, Phillip Eller, Beth Forbes, BethAnn Lawrence
Group Updates, including any legislation. Howard Center: Julie Smith will be leaving as Director of the Autism Program. The new director Rya Hardee Fauth will begin attending meetings in the future. We will miss you Julie! Staffing for ABA programs: Continues to be difficult, hard to find RBT level staff. Jenn Johnson shared that SD Associates has had some success with shifting to group models when appropriate, and hiring part-time staff (college students). Laurie Mulhern shared that in Bennington County she’s seen the opposite trend with RBTs available but not enough BCBAs to provide adequate supervision.
Placement and Least Restrictive Environment with Cammie Naylor, Vermont Legal Aid See slides from this extremely informative presentation.

Agenda Item
Discussion on FAPE – what it is, and what it is not (it’s not the ‘best program’). IDEA does not pay for medical placements. IEP team determines placement; LEA determines setting. IEP team is not bound to medical expert prescription. They must consider the information but not bound by it.
Wrap Up and Next Steps Next meeting: March 26th 11:00-12:00