Support Autism in North Dakota (SAND) News

The SAND staff submitted an Autism Speaks grant proposal in November. If funded, we will have the ability to help up to three interdisciplinary team sites purchase anADOS-2 kit, to cover operating costs, or to pay consultant fees for their interdisciplinary team clinics. These teams will have been trained through the SAND grant and require financial support to get the clinics up and running. We should find out if we have received funding around December 13th.

The SAND grant is offering opportunities for professionals in medical and education fields to develop Interdisciplinary Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) diagnostic teams in the state of North Dakota.

North Dakota is experiencing a shortage of professionals willing and capable of serving young children for possible autism diagnosis.

The benefits of the interdisciplinary team approach are a roundtable discussion of the views and assessments of the child to confirm/deny a diagnosis in multiple settings. The high level of collaboration and collegiality will lead to a rich discussion about the child’s current functioning and programming options at home and school and is considered ‘best practice’ in diagnostic assessments. The training will walk professionals through the process of organizing and delivering community-based autism screening and diagnostic clinics.

If you have any questions or would like more information about Interdisciplinary ASD diagnostic team development, please contact Hilary Liccini at hilary.liccini@minotstateu.edu or 800-233-1737 ext. 3008.

At the November Autism Task Force Meeting, State Autism Conference, and ADOS-2 Training Page 02
iPads Help Children with Autism Develop Language Page 03
Nine Ideas for a Happy Holiday Season Page 03
Resources Page 04
Upcoming Training Page 04

Upcoming Trainings

Daycare/Preschool Trainings
December 9: Valley City January 9: Minot
March 13: Beach

ASD Training for Medical Providers
If you are interested in hosting a training on how to effectively utilize and interpret initial screening tools for ASD as well as information on ASD and the referral process, please contact Suzanne Blossom at 800-233-1737 ext. 4946 or email suzanne.blossom@minotstateu.edu.

Interdisciplinary Team Training
Tentative teams include: Trinity and St. Alexius
If you are interested in an interdisciplinary training, please contact Hilary Liccini at 800-233-1737 ext. 3008 or email hilary.liccini@minotstateu.edu.

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Autism Support Groups in ND
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**Autism in the News**

**Free Accessibility Assessments Offered by Disability Health II Project at NCDPD**

Kari Schmidt, Project Director

The ND Disability Health II is a CDC-funded project operated out of the ND Center for Persons with Disabilities located at Minot State University. The project goals include improving health promotion, access to health care, and emergency preparedness for people with disabilities including individuals with autism.

Nationwide, people with disabilities experience greater health disparities, such as higher rates of chronic health conditions, compared to people without disabilities. Access to services can be a barrier to health care for some people. Making areas accessible does not always mean high cost. Sometimes small, inexpensive changes can make big differences. For example, adjusting the door push to the door opens more easily, printing materials using large font, and designating a relief area for services animals greatly increases accessibility at little to no cost. In addition, pre-visit planning done before appointments can identify accommodations needed during the appointment to better prepare the medical staff to any needs the patient. Scan the QR code to view the video and learn more about the concept of Universal Design which means accessibility for every person.

The Disability Health II project is offering free accessibility assessments to healthcare facilities in ND. Disability Health II will not perform a routine audit of services or activities for your organization. They will use the information you provide concerning how your organization is currently working with people with disabilities and needs or wants that may be available to make your organization more accessible to individuals with disabilities.

**2014 ADOS-2 CLINICAL TRAINING:**

*When:* January 13-14, 2014

*Where:* Center for Neurobehavorial Development, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis MN

*Fee:* $475

**Description:** This is a 2-day Clinical Training on the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, Second Edition (ADOS-2). You will learn how to use the ADOS-2 in clinical practice to assess and diagnose autism.

**Registration:**

For information on how to register: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YF2EFG

For more information: http://www.cohn.umn.edu/cd/cnbd/academicevents/ADOS.html

**Holiday Health and Safety Tips**

This holiday season, give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others following these holiday tips from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention:


**FEATURE ARTICLE**

**“Nine Ideas for a Happy Holiday Season”**

By: Christine Brigden

The holiday season is a busy time of year where the speed of life seems to pick up and routine days are replaced with change. For families with a child with autism, routine is an important factor on a day-to-day basis. Children get used to certain events happening on a consistent schedule. Here are a few ideas to help your child make a smooth transition from routine to festive.

1) Start holiday preparations early with either an open-ended or a specific plan. Children need help to engage in a smooth transition from routine to festive.

2) Spend quality time with your child on special occasions. Children need quality time with their parents.

3) Prepare your child for seeing the Santa Clause with pictures, stories or cartoons. Santa is no longer a distant figure. Children can anticipate seeing Santa.

4) Have your child help with decorating for the holidays in a big or small way. Getting them involved is a wonderful way of helping them cope with the decoration being there. They feel a huge sense of pride but also comfort knowing that the decorations are there because they put them there. They remain in control of their space.

5) Set up recharging area with your child at your home or at events where they can rest and recharge. This can be a place where they can feel safe, it’s space, comfortable... It can be a place where they can go to recharge and know that they can come back.

6) Try to find some way to keep things in perspective. You don’t have to be outside for safety reason and the best and keep things in perspective. You don’t have to follow the rules for being outside for safety reason and the best and keep things in perspective.

7) Christmas is a time of giving. This year try to give a gift of health and safety to your family.

8) If you have children with autism, try to plan the day ahead of time. This can help them stay focused on the activity.

9) Have realistic expectations for your holiday season. Wine and dine, but have fun for the best and keep things in perspective. You don’t have to do things all at once. You don’t have to do things all at once.

**Tips provided by:**


For more information, visit kidtalk.org

**iPads Help Children with Autism Develop Language**

By: Stacey Anderson

Ann Kaiser, a researcher at Vanderbilt Peabody College of education and human development conducted a study funded by Autism Speaks on language development in late-speaking children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The study has found that using speech-generating devices to encourage children ages 5 to 8 to develop speaking skills resulted in children developing considerably more spoken language than did other interventions. The use of iPads has made this discovery even more promising. Now iPads have many apps that emulate augmentative and alternative communication devices, making interventions more accessible, cheaper, and more user friendly for minimally verbal children. iPads are increasingly popular in schools, in homes and in intervention specialists offices. Therefore, they are a wonderful tool for language development in children with ASD.

Dr. Kaiser states that the reason an iPad can be so effective for helping children with ASD develop language skills is because “every time the iPad says a word, it sounds exactly the same, which is important for children with autism, who generally need things to be as consistent as possible.” When the average person speaks, they can say the same word a little different each time. Sometimes words can even blend together when a person is speaking. This can make language development more challenging for children with ASD.

Dr. Kaiser is building on this research even further, by using iPads in two contrasting types of interventions – direct teaching and naturalistic teaching. The purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the two types of communication interventions for children with ASD who use minimal language. This study will continue through Spring 2017.

For more information, visit kidtalk.org

Study information can be found at:

- Autism Speaks #5666: “Characterizing Cognition in Nonverbal Individuals with Autism” Clinical Trials Number NCT01013545 (Connie Kasari, UCLA; Ann Kaiser, Vanderbilt; Rebecca Landa, Johns Hopkins)

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**Autism Task Force Meeting is on December 16, 2013**

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force meeting is open to the public. The meeting will take place from 10:30-3:30 pm (central time) using ten video conference sites in North Dakota.

Agenda items include: updates on diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders; changes related to autism and the Support Autism in North Dakota grant from North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University.

For video locations of the meeting, click on the following link: http://www.information.com/event/article/id/640416/group/homepage/

**SAVE THE DATE!**


**“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.”**

- Albert Einstein
**Autism in the News**

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The Disability Health II project is offering free accessibility assessments to healthcare facilities in ND. Disability Health II is not a regular service and does not need to share any information related to your assessment with any other entities. The purpose of this assessment is solely to assist in being as accessible and accommodating as possible for all people, including those with disabilities.

Disability Health II staff can also provide technical assistance, trainings, and information related to accessibility and providing healthcare services to people with cognitive, physical, sensory, and mental health disabilities. Contact project staff at 1-800-1737 or visit the website at www.ndedp.org/health for more information or to request an assessment at your facility.

### Holiday Health and Safety Tips

This holiday season, give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others following these holiday tips from the Disability Health II project. Most people experience stress during the holiday season. People with disabilities, without disabilities, and those with ASD develop language skills is so effective for helping children with ASD speak language skills in children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The study has found that using speech-generating devices to encourage children ages 5 to 8 develop speaking skills resulted in children developing considerably more spoken language than did other interventions. The use of iPads has made this discovery even more promising. Now iPads have many apps that emulate augmentative and alternative communication devices, making interventions more accessible, cheaper, and more user friendly for minimally verbal children. iPads are increasingly popular in schools, in homes and in intervention specialists offices. Therefore, they are a wonderful tool for language development in children with ASD.

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1. **Start holiday preparations early** with either developing a loose “routine” for the holidays or making a calendar about when the decorations will go up, how long they will be on display, etc. You will still have certain relatives and other events through the season that will be different than the normal routine.

2. **Coordinate with your child’s school**. Ask your child’s teacher how he or she prepares your child for the holidays. Try to incorporate the same traditions and symbols at home. If they love spending time with family, they may be less anxious.

3. **Prepare your child for seeing or meeting Santa**. Create a Santa timeline with pictures, stories or cartoons. Santa is no less magical when you see him on a parade float or performing magic in a movie. Many children child

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OUR TRAINERS ARE ‘GROWING FUTURES’ CERTIFIED.

GPIC Diagnostic Clinics

The Great Plains Interdisciplinary Autism Diagnostic Clinic (GPIC) will be tentatively holding our next GPIC Clinic in Minot on February 11, 2014. We welcome professional, educational, or parent referrals to be part of this clinic. We are able to assess two children per clinic. The grant supports clinics held at NDCPD in Minot and at the Northwest Human Service Center in Williston. For more information please contact Hilary Liccini, Project Director at 800-233-1737 ext. 3008 or email hilary.liccini@minotstateu.edu.