

NDCPD Training Events

Connecting Individuals with Disabilities and Community Members by Angela Amado, Ph.D

Time/Date/Place:

9:00 AM-4:00 PM (for all 4 days)
 September 6, 2007 @ Comfort Inn, Bismarck, ND
 September 7, 2007 @ MSU Student Union, Minot, ND
 September 10, 2007 @ Development Homes, Inc. in Grand Forks, ND
 September 11, 2007 @ Research 1, 1735 NDSU Research Park Drive, Fargo, ND

Registration Fee: \$60.00

Customizing Employment for Individuals with High Support Needs by Steve Savage

Time/Date/Place:

9:00 AM-4:00 PM
 November 8, 2007
 Comfort Inn, Bismarck, ND

Registration Fee: \$60.00

For pre-registration contact:

Cheryl Rystedt @ 1-800-233-1737 or email at Cheryl.rystedt@minotstateu.edu

The COLLABORATOR

North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University

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The Collaborator format, layout, and logo design by Susan Anderson, edited by Kari Arrayan.

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Autism Awareness

Rachelle Veazey, NDCPD Project Coordinator

Autism was first identified in 1943 by Dr. Leo Kanner of John Hopkins. According to Autism Speaks, a leading nonprofit organization, autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that typically lasts throughout a person's lifetime. Autism is part of a group of disorders known as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported in its February, 2007 weekly Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) that the prevalence of autism is now 1 in 150. This data indicates an increase in previous estimates. The following box contains possible red flags for autism spectrum disorders provided by the CDC.

Children and adults with an autism spectrum disorder might:

- Be very interested in people, but not know how to talk to, play with, or relate to them
- Repeat or echo words or phrases said to them, or repeat words or phrases in place of normal language (echolalia)
- Have trouble expressing their needs using typical words or motions
- Repeat actions over and over again
- Have trouble adapting to changes in routine
- Have unusual reactions to the way things smell, taste, look, feel, or sound
- Lose skills they once had (for instance, stop saying words they were once using)

*Talk to your child's doctor or nurse if your child loses skills at any age.

Children and adults with an autism spectrum disorder might:

- Not play "pretend" games (pretend to "feed" a doll)
- Not point at objects to show interest (point at an airplane flying over)
- Not look at objects when another person points at them
- Have trouble relating to others or not have an interest in other people at all
- Avoid eye contact and want to be alone
- Have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings
- Prefer not to be held or cuddled or might cuddle only when they want to
- Appear to be unaware when other people talk to them but respond to other sounds

Early diagnosis and intervention is critical. Research indicates that early intervention can result in significant improvement in behavior. Many different interventions are available including: ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis), floortime, occupational therapy, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), relationship development intervention, Sensory Integration Therapy, speech therapy, TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-Handicapped Children), verbal behavior intervention, as well as using a gluten-free/casein-free diet.

(Continued from Page 1 – Rachelle Veazey)

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) has been involved with several activities to promote awareness and provide guidance for families of children with autism and professionals who work with children with autism. Three CD casts have been presented since January, 2007. Each CD cast focused on a separate area of awareness including family, educational, and medical. Kelly Vig presented the family-focused CD cast. She is a parent of a child with autism and also a nurse. This allowed her to provide a unique perspective to other parents of children with autism. Lori Kalash, a special educator from Devils Lake, presented the educational-focused CD cast. She provided ideas for social stories, classroom set up and crisis intervention. Dr. Catherine Yeager, a psychologist, presented the medical-focused CD cast. Several case studies were presented that allowed participants to gain a better understanding of what autism is and what it is not. Several treatment options were discussed. Dr. Yeager suggested that parents and professionals work together to find the best intervention options for their child since children respond differently to interventions.

Upcoming events include a parent workshop in August and a screening in November. On August 3, 2007, a workshop titled "Parent Tips for Autism" will be held at Minot State University. Jennifer Hefter, a master's prepared special educator, will assist parents in developing social stories and schedule boards. Lisa Burckhard who is ABA certified and also a parent of a child with autism will present hands-on skills for parents who have children with autism. Anyone interested in participating may register by emailing Vickie at Vickie.brabandt@minotstateu.edu.

Information about the workshop can be found on the NDCPD website at www.ndcpd.org. NDCPD is also co-sponsoring an autism conference in September, 2007 with Souris Valley Special Services. Workshops will focus on interventions, transitions, and adaptations for school and home.

Much research needs to be conducted in order to truly understand autism and what interventions are the most effective. The cause of autism is still a mystery and prevention remains a puzzle, but we can be aware of the signs and symptoms of autism as well as treatment options available for children with ASD.

Several websites are very helpful in providing information about autism. They include:

autismspeaks.org

cdc.gov/autism

ianproject.org

asatonline.org

autism.org

References

Autism Speaks. Retrieved June 14, 2007 from <http://www.autismspeaks.org>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevalence of autism spectrum disorders- Autism and developmental disabilities Monitoring six sites, United States, 2000, Surveillance Summaries, February 8, 2007. MMWR 2007; 56(SS-1).

For additional copies of the Collaborator contact Kari Arrayan at 1-800-233-1737.

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Minot, ND
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'Workers with Disabilities: Talent for a Winning Team!' is the 2007 National Disability Employment Awareness Month theme

By APSE Members: Tom Thompson, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Tom Alexander, NDCPD Project Director

"The 2007 'Talent for a Winning Team' theme captures the heart of the president's **New Freedom Initiative**, which is that Americans with disabilities are an underutilized reservoir of ambition, talent, and skill ready to make great contributions in the workplace," said Secretary Chao.

Each October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month by congressional designation. The Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) leads the nation's activities and produces materials to increase the public's awareness of the contributions and skills of American workers with disabilities. Typically, private sector; federal, state and local government; and advocacy organizations piggyback on the same theme to plan events and programs that showcase the abilities of employees and job candidates with disabilities.

"America's employers benefit when they provide opportunities for Americans with disabilities to work, said Roy Grizzard, Assistant Secretary of Labor for ODEP. "A winning team will include people with disabilities."

ODEP is the nation's first assistant secretary-led office that specifically addresses policies that impact the employment of people with disabilities. For example, ODEP has developed methods for the 3,500 One-Stop Career Centers nationwide to serve people with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities. Also, collaborating with sister Labor Department agencies – the Employment and Training Administration and the Civil Rights Center – ODEP developed a disability checklist to assist with implementation of Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act at the local level.

As we all know, North Dakotans have a very strong work ethic and that includes people with disabilities. According to the Job Service North Dakota website, North Dakota's unemployment rate for May, 2007 was 3.0%. It is also noted that North Dakota has one of the lowest unemployment rates of people with disabilities in the country. According to the 2005 American Community Survey 52.5% of people with disabilities in North Dakota participate in the workforce.

The services and supports for people with disabilities to go to work in North Dakota are very strong. To celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month, many organizations in North Dakota plan activities such as: public service announcements, disability employment awareness events, ADA training and many public speaking engagements.

As October approaches, please take the time to celebrate Disability Employment Awareness Month and to look for special events in your area.

Awareness of Fraud Increases in North Dakota Thanks to SMP Volunteers!

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Regional Volunteer Coordinators are providing educational group presentations to local seniors in their regions to help beneficiaries become better health care consumers by detecting unintended errors and deliberate abuses in Medicare. The volunteers will also provide one-on-one education sessions with beneficiaries and family members on how to read the Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) and, if they suspect errors, fraud or abuse, to guide them through the resolution process. Special *thanks* to the eight regional volunteers:

- Region 1 – Linda Ruland
- Region 2 – Brenda Bergsrud
- Region 3 – Jim Hunt
- Region 4 – Maggie Oakland
- Region 5 – Myron Jabs
- Region 6 – Jean Lang
- Region 7 – Eileen Schnaidt
- Region 8 – Nancy Hanel



To find out more information about the SMP project, or to contact the SMP coordinator in your area, call 1-800-233-1737 or visit the SMP website at <http://www.ndcpd.org/smp>.

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1-800-233-1737

NDCPD Project Staff Provide Testimony during 2007 Legislative Sessions

Amy Armstrong, NDCPD Project Director
North Dakota Real Choice Systems Change Grant – Rebalancing Initiative

The ND Department of Human Services introduced legislation during the 2007 Legislative Session as a result of the North Dakota Real Choice Systems Change Grant – Rebalancing Initiative. NDCPD project staff provided testimony and data to the 60th Legislative Assembly to support this legislation. The Rebalancing Initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Division, was awarded to the ND Department of Human Services – Aging Services Division in September, 2004. This three year grant was contracted and facilitated by NDCPD and will conclude in September, 2007.

The purpose of the Real Choice Rebalancing Grant has been to identify ways to improve choice and access to continuum of care services, particularly home and community services (HCBS), for ND's seniors and adults with disabilities. In particular, this grant has considered ways to balance resources for HCBS and nursing home care in ND and considered ways to develop a streamlined system or resource center for seniors and adults with disabilities to access continuum of care services.

Prior to the legislative session, considerable research was conducted and reported on by NDCPD's Real Choice Rebalancing Grant staff. This research included over forty focus groups and personal interviews with ND consumers of continuum of care services, family members, and providers. Questionnaires were also used to gather information from hospital discharge planners and consumers.

Several major outcomes and recommendations from this research included:

- The desire of seniors and adults with disabilities to remain in their homes and/or live as independently as possible as they age and as their needs change.
- The need for a streamlined, consistent, and reliable system to assist consumers, families, and providers in accessing continuum of care information and services.
- The need for increased funding and resources for home and community based service options, particularly in rural communities, in order to provide adequate

continuum of care service options to support consumers; choice to live as independently as possible in the communities.

Considering the research outcomes, recommendations and the work of the Real Choice Rebalancing Grant Steering Committee; the ND Department of Human Services (DHS) introduced Senate Bill 2070. Senate Bill 2070 would allow the DHS to apply for federal funds for the development and implementation of an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Over 43 states have successfully implemented ADRCs' nationwide. These Resource Centers would assist ND's seniors and adults with disabilities in accessing both publicly and privately funded continuum of care services.

An important part of the legislative process was providing testimony to support the Senate Bill 2070. The Project Director provided Senate and House Human Services and Appropriations committees with testimony summarizing the vast data that supported the development of an ADRC for ND. DHS-Aging Services Division Director and several Steering Committee members also provided testimony in support of the bill. Senate Bill 2070 passed in the 60th (2007) Legislative Session and was signed by Governor Hoeven.

The DHS plans to apply for federal funding to begin the development and implementation of North Dakota's Aging and Disability Resource Centers. The ADRCs' will help service agencies and providers that are currently in existence to work together, streamline their work, and make accessing long-term support services a simpler and less confusing process for North Dakotans.

If you have questions or would like to access RCR Grant publications, please visit the DHS website at: <http://www.nd.gov/humanservices/info/pubs/ltccontinuum.html> or call Amy Armstrong, NDCPD Project Director, at 1-800-233-1737.



NDCPD Staff Receives Award



Cathy Haarstad, Multicultural Coordinator and Consumer Liaison at NDCPD, received the Glenda Schepp Exceptional Dedication Award from Pathfinder Services of ND. This award is given to a

person who exemplifies the Pathfinder spirit, integrity, and exceptional dedication to build better educational futures for North Dakota children with disabilities. Cathy was recognized for her valuable contributions and outstanding service that support the mission of Pathfinder Services. Congratulations Cathy!

Disability History Facts.....

- July, 1832 – the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston admits its first two students, sisters Sophia and Abbeg Carter.
- July, 1848 – the first presidential institution for people with mental retardation is founded by Samuel Gridley Howe at the Perkins Institution in Boston. During the next century, hundreds of thousands of developmentally disabled children and adults will be institutionalized, many for their entire lives.

Source:
www.sfsu.edu/~hrdpu/chron.htm

CD Casts

Promoting Wellness and Healthy Lifestyles for Adults with DD

by James Rimmer

Time/Date/Registration Fee:

1:00 PM-4:00 PM

October 26, 2007

\$25.00 per site

For registration please contact:

Teri Aufforth at NDCPD

1-800-233-1737

Parent Tips for Autism

by Jennifer Hefter and Lisa Burckhard

Time/Date:

August 3, 2007

9:00 AM-12:00 NOON

For registration please send your name and phone number to one of the following:

Email:

Vickie.brabandt@minotstateu.edu

Fax: 701-858-3483

\$10 materials fee can be mailed to:

NDCPD Parent Tips for Autism
Workshop

Attn: Vickie Brabandt
500 University Ave West
Minot, ND 58707

Updates on this can be found on the NDCPD website at www.ndcpd.org.

The **North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities** is a member of the **Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)**. AUCD is a national network of interdisciplinary centers advancing policy and practice through research, education and services for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families and communities.



Benefits Counseling: Critical to Successful Employment

By Lisa Johnson, NDCPD Strategic Planning Coordinator and
Terry Peterson, Rehab Services, Inc.

Benefits counseling has proven to be a key element in promoting independence and self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities. Just as CPAs understand tax code, attorneys assist in the legal system, and brokers navigate the investment world, a benefits counselor attempts to inform Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients about their disability benefits and the use of work incentives.

Benefits counselors provide a "one stop" resource for people who receive SSDI and SSI benefits who are in transition toward greater self-sufficiency. No single agency is better suited to provide a complex analysis across several systems that provide public benefits including: Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare, state healthcare programs, food stamps, and Rehabilitation Consulting Services. People with disabilities often rely on more than one agency for services as part of their overall benefits package. Even minor changes such as a change in number of hours worked or an increase in pay can have a significant impact on overall benefits. Thus, many individuals may be apprehensive about any change in their employment environment. Benefits counselors can prevent crisis through coordination and negotiation with other agencies. Educating people regarding their options and helping them plan for and manage change can greatly reduce fears related to personal benefits.

In North Dakota, benefits counselors are called Community Work Incentive Coordinator's (CWIC's) and operate through the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program. While other states, similar in size to ND's disability population, have as many as 14 benefits counselors, two benefits counselors reside within the state of North Dakota. Services in eastern ND are provided by Rehab Services in Fargo, while Terry

Peterson in Minot, primarily serves western ND. After a brief visit with a benefits counselor, one will quickly realize the complexity of benefits planning and what a valuable service benefits counseling is for individuals.

Clearly, there is a need for more benefits counselors within the state. In the meantime, informal benefits counseling, a somewhat less comprehensive analysis, occurs throughout agencies and organizations by individuals genuinely concerned about helping others and operating within the scope and services of their respective organizations. It is only through the tracking of true demand for this service and the documentation of positive outcomes that the consideration of additional staffing can occur. When asked what resources are available to individuals seeking benefits counseling, benefits counselors believe that individual consultation with an emphasis on planning and prevention to avert crises caused by sudden loss of cash or healthcare benefits is of utmost concern. Individuals with disabilities and family members of individuals with disabilities are encouraged to contact their local benefits counselor.

Contact a Benefits Counselor:

Rehab Services, Inc.
Community Work Incentives Coordinator
3350 35th Ave. South
Fargo, ND 58104
701-478-9122
Email: ndbenefits@hotmail.com

Terry Peterson

Rehab Services, Inc.
Community Work Incentives Coordinator
112 2nd Ave SW
Minot, ND 58701
701-839-4240
Email: rsi5@srt.com