

weap: The People

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Wisconsin Early Autism Project, Inc.

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When is Your Child Ready for School?

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Social skill delays are perhaps the most devastating of the symptoms of autism and do not improve with age (White, Koenig, & Scahill, 2007). As children with autism enter school, the impact of social delays becomes more noticeable. Many parents send their preschool age children with ASD to school because of their belief (often shared by teachers) that being in a group setting will foster social skills. However, there are three reasons why this may actually interfere with their child's progress.

First, many researchers representing various schools of thought regarding treatment of autism agree that placing a child with ASD into a group of neurotypical children (or placing a model neurotypical child in a group of children with autism), does not result in acquisition of social skills without training and preparation of teachers (Wetherby and Woods, 2006), classmates (Kamps, Royer, Dugan, Kravits, Gonzalez-Lopez, & Garcia et al., 2002; Terpstra, Higgins, & Pierce, 2000), or children with autism (Anderson, Moore, Godfrey, & Fletcher-Flinn, 2004; Koegel and Koegel, 2006; McConnell, 2002; Newsom, 1998; Olley, 2005; Owen-DeSchryver, Carr, Cale, & Blakley-Smith, 2008). Without a specific intervention to build engagement, neurotypical children tend to exclude or victimize children with autism by bullying or telling

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Feds Form Plan to Combat Autism

Justin Sallows

Wisconsin Early Autism Project



IACC Panelists listen to public about autism on May 3rd, 2008 in Sacramento, CA.

On Friday, December 12th, the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC), a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, met to finalize plans for what exactly needs to be done to fulfill the obligations of the Combating Autism Act of 2006. They came up with 38 research objectives. Below are 10 of them:

- Develop at least one new diagnostic instrument (briefer, less time intensive);
- Validate a panel of biomarkers that separately, or in combination of behavioral measures, accurately identify, one or more subtypes of children at risk for developing ASD;
- Establish an international network of brain and other tissue acquisition sites with standardized protocols;

All Payrolls

2009

Timesheets must be to

WEAP (Madison) by:

Payroll Dates:	Pay Period Being Compensated		
	From:	To:	
January 2, 2009	December 8, 2008	December 21, 2008	December 26, 2008
January 16, 2009	December 22, 2008	January 4, 2009	January 12, 2008
January 30, 2009	January 5, 2009	January 18, 2009	January 26, 2009
February 13, 2009	January 19, 2009	February 1, 2009	February 9, 2009
February 27, 2009	February 2, 2009	February 15, 2009	February 23, 2009
March 13, 2009	February 16, 2009	March 1, 2009	March 9, 2009
March 27, 2009	March 2, 2009	March 15, 2009	March 23, 2009
April 10, 2009	March 16, 2009	March 29, 2009	April 6, 2009
April 24, 2009	March 30, 2009	April 12, 2009	April 20, 2009
May 8, 2009	April 13, 2009	April 26, 2009	May 4, 2009
May 22, 2009	April 27, 2009	May 10, 2009	May 18, 2009
June 5, 2009	May 11, 2009	May 24, 2009	June 1, 2009
June 19, 2009	May 25, 2009	June 7, 2009	June 15, 2009
July 3, 2009	June 8, 2009	June 21, 2009	June 29, 2009
July 17, 2009	June 22, 2009	July 5, 2009	July 13, 2009
July 31, 2009	July 6, 2009	July 19, 2009	July 27, 2009
August 14, 2009	July 20, 2009	August 2, 2009	August 10, 2009
August 28, 2009	August 3, 2009	August 16, 2009	August 24, 2009
September 11, 2009	August 17, 2009	August 30, 2009	September 4, 2009
September 25, 2009	August 31, 2009	September 13, 2009	September 21, 2009
October 9, 2009	September 14, 2009	September 27, 2009	October 5, 2009
October 23, 2009	September 28, 2009	October 11, 2009	October 19, 2009
November 6, 2009	October 12, 2009	October 25, 2009	November 2, 2009
November 20, 2009	October 26, 2009	November 8, 2009	November 16, 2009
December 4, 2009	November 9, 2009	November 22, 2009	November 30, 2009
December 18, 2009	November 23, 2009	December 6, 2009	December 14, 2009
*** January 4, 2010	December 7, 2009	December 20, 2009	December 24, 2009

*** Regular date would be Jan 1st but the Federal Reserve will be closed for ACH transactions.

Timesheets due early -
Postal Holiday weeks

them to do things they shouldn't do (Koegel & Koegel, 2006), and children with autism tend to isolate in unstructured settings such as free time or recess (DiSalvo & Oswald, 2002; Pierce and Schreibman, 1997; Terpstra et al, 2000), even when typical classmates are nearby (Anderson et al., 2004; Koegel & Koegel, 2006).

Second, placing children in school reduces time in treatment. Two recent meta-analyses (a way of combining results from many studies, 14 in one study and 22 in the other) found that hours were strongly related to outcome, with 25 or more hours resulting in much larger gains than fewer hours (Eldevik, 2007; Makrygianni & Reed, 2008). Further, children are able to learn much more rapidly during preschool years than later. This is thought to be related to the ability of the brain to acquire information rapidly during these early years (Dawson, 2008), which is less the case later on. Once children are required by law to attend school at age 6, it is much more difficult to schedule the optimal number of hours.

Third, seven studies have compared the effectiveness of 1:1 behavioral treatment with that of preschool programs, including those specifically designed for children with autism (Cohen, Amerine-Dickens, & Smith, 2006; Howard et al., 2005). All but one study, which had many methodological problems, found that ABA produced larger gains, even when the hours in ABA treatment and school were the same (Eikeseth et al., 2002, 2007).

Several studies have examined strategies for building social skills using social skills groups, peer mediation, and individual treatment. Social skills groups have addressed emotions, body language, perspective taking, conversation skills, dealing with teasing, imitation, turn taking, asking others to play, negotiation, and reading non-verbal communication. Some studies included practicing with trained peers as well as parent training groups to facilitate generalization at home. Results showed increased interaction within the group and with trained peers, but generally poor maintenance once treatment was ended, and poor generalization to interaction with untrained peers when it was measured (see White et al., 2007 for a review).

Peer mediation represents a strategy to work in the natural environment and has often been implemented in schools. Peers were trained to respond to initiations, engage and praise the child with autism, to demonstrate appropriate playground behavior, e.g., playing on the slide rather than isolating, and pro-social interaction, e.g., making choices and responding to others. Peer mediation has been effective in building interaction with trained peers and may have better maintenance than social skills groups, but again, generalization to untrained peers has been weak (see e.g., Pierce & Schreibman, 1995, 1997; Harper, Symon, and Frea, 2008).

The most successful strategies for building social skills

quickly have been based on modeling, either video modeling (Bellini & Akullian, 2007) or in-vivo modeling, i.e., real-life demonstration followed by role-playing and practice to teach specific skills, e.g., initiating social contact using a specific phrase (Jahr, Eldevik, & Eikeseth, 2000). Generalization in ABA studies has been addressed by teaching several alternate phrases, practicing with several peers, especially untrained peers, and practicing in several settings, e.g., home with siblings or neighbor children and school with classmates during class time (requesting supplies), free time (joining others), and recess (asking others to play, (e.g., Sallows & Graupner, 2005; Cohen et al, 2006). Self-management training, in which children learned to observe their own behavior and to be responsible for using the new skill without supervision in order to meet a goal and receive reinforcement, was effective in improving maintenance and generalization (for a review, see Lee, Simpson, & Shogren, 2007). Therapists were able to successfully withdraw once children had learned these skills.

Most of the studies described above were brief (5-20 hours for the entire intervention), and did not compare children's improvements to the behavior of typical peers, making it difficult to determine whether any of the children reached age appropriate functioning. However, several comprehensive behavioral treatment programs based on ABA have documented improvements in measures which do compare gains with skills of typical peers. For example in our study, Rapid Learners (48% of treated children) showed gains on the Vineland Socialization Scale filled out by parents and teachers, with children improving from the clearly deficient range (standard score 62, where 85 to 115 is roughly average) to the average range (standard score 88).

With the above information, it is hoped that parents can more easily make an informed decision regarding whether school placement during the preschool years (under 6) is best for their child, or whether a more focused social skills program is required. If unsure, parents may wish to observe their child at school, watching closely for instances of actual interaction, not just being near others or running and chasing on the playground, activities which do not require one-on-one interaction and don't help much to build social skills.♦

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- Complete a large-scale, multi-disciplinary, collaborative project that longitudinally and comprehensively examines how the biological, clinical and developmental profiles of children, youths and adults with ASD change over time compared to typically developing individuals by 2020;
- Coordinate and implement the inclusion of approximately 20,000 subjects for genome-wide association studies, as well as a sample of 1,200 sequencing studies to examine more than 50 candidate genes by 2011;
- Study the effect of vaccines, vaccine components and multiple vaccine administration in autism causation and severity through a variety of approaches including cell and animal studies and understand whether and how certain subpopulations in humans may be more susceptible to adverse effects of vaccines;
- Determine design and feasibility of addressing different health outcomes in vaccinated, unvaccinated and alternatively-vaccinated groups;
- Conduct a multi-site study of the subsequent pregnancies of 1000 women with a child with ASD to assess the impact of environmental factors by 2014;
- Standardize and validate at least 20 robust model systems (cellular and/or animal) that replicate features of ASD and will allow identification of specific molecular targets or neural circuits amenable to existing or new interventions;
- Test the efficacy of 11 evidence-based services for people with ASD in community settings by 2015.

A budget has not been set yet, but it is expected to exceed 1 billion dollars. President Barack Obama has already pledged 1 billion dollars for autism (W;TP vol. 2, Issue 5) so it seems likely he will endorse the groups recommendations.

The group will reconvene later this month to finalize their report. You may contact this group to offer your comments and suggestions, as well as find out more about their objectives and plans at their website:♦

<http://iacc.hhs.gov/public-comment/>

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San Diego, CA.

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Upcoming Events

Educational Programming and Instructional Strategies for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Provides "best practice" approach for designing and implementing appropriate educational programs. Presented by Susan Stokes, M.A., CCC-SLP and Peggy Bartman, B.S., OTR.

February 3, 2009

Oshkosh

\$115

Lasure's Banquet Hall

3105 S. Washburn St.

Registration: 8:00-8:30 AM

Workshop: 8:30AM-3:30PM

920-651-0796

www.cesa6.k12.wi.us

SEE COMPLETE LISTINGS ON OUR WEBSITE WWW.WIAUTISM.COM



Groups and Classes

Location	Group	Age/Level	Facilitator	Fee	Days	Time	Start Date
Madison	Parent Group	Open to Community	Chris W	\$30/session \$4/child daycare (rgstr 2 wks in advc.)	2 nd Tues ea. Month	4:00- 5:30PM	Ongoing
Madison	Social Skills Yellow Group	Ages 5-7	Katie K	\$30/session	Thursdays	4:00- 5:30PM	Jan 8- April 2
Madison	Social Skills	Ages 9-12	Katie K	\$30/session	Wednesdays	4:30- 6:30PM	Jan 14- Apr 1
Madison	Teen Group	Community Ages 12 +	Matt N	\$40/session	Thurs E/O Is outing	4:00- 6:00PM	Ongoing
Milwaukee	Social Skills	Ages 7-9	Stephanie B	\$30/session	Tuesdays	4:30- 6:00PM	Jan 13-May 26
Milwaukee	Play group	Ages 3-5	Stephanie B	\$30/session	Wednesdays	9:00- 10:00 AM	Jan 14-May 27
Milwaukee	Kid's Group	Ages 8-12	Stephanie B	\$30/session	Mondays	4:30- 6:00PM	Jan 12-May 18
Milwaukee	Social Skills	Ages 4-6	Stephanie B	\$30/session	Mondays	2:30- 4:00PM	Jan 12-May 4
Milwaukee	Teen Club	Ages 12+ Call for prerequisites	Mel J	\$30/session occasional outing cost rgstr 1 week prior to each event	Mondays	4:00- 6:00PM	Jan 18-Jun 8
Milwaukee	Community Group	Ages 10+	Mel J	\$30/session occasional outing cost	1 day a Month	Varies call for times	Jan 23-Jun 15
La Crosse	Social interaction	Parents & Care Givers	Chris W	FREE	Thursday	5:30- 7:00PM	January 29
La Crosse	Strategies for Asperger's	Parents & Care Givers	Chris W	FREE	Thursday	5:30- 7:00PM	February 12
La Crosse	Caring for Caregivers	Parents & Care Givers	Chris W	FREE	Thursday	5:30- 7:00PM	February 26
La Crosse	Community Outings	Parents & Care Givers	Chris W	FREE	Thursday	5:30- 7:00PM	March 12
La Crosse	Daily Living Skills	Parents & Care Givers	Chris W	FREE	Thursday	5:30- 7:00PM	March 26
La Crosse	PECS	Parents & Care Givers	Chris W	\$5 materials fee	Thursday	5:30- 7:00PM	April 9

Current Openings

<p>GREEN BAY 920-338-1610 Baileys Harbor Florence Manawa Manitowoc Oneida Sheboygan Shawano Wautoma</p>	<p>MILWAUKEE 262-432-5660 Brookfield Brown Deer Cudahy Ixonla Kenosha Kewaskum Milwaukee</p>	<p>Mukwonago Muskego Nashotah New Berlin Oak Creek Port Washington Slinger Union Grove Waukesha Wauwatosa West Bend</p>	<p>MADISON 608-288-9040 Hillpoint Mt. Horeb New Glarus Richland Center Waunakee</p>	<p>LA CROSSE 608-781-6500 La Crosse Riverfalls</p>	<p>EAU CLAIRE 715-832-2233 Eau Claire Hixton Hudson Menomonie New Richmond Osseo</p>
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