



Indiana Institute on Disability and Community



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INDIANA INSTITUTE IN THE NEWS



Grant to Study Innovative Employment Intervention for Students with Disabilities

High school students with disabilities too often leave school without the connections they need to adult services and supports and are therefore unprepared for paid employment. Many remain unemployed and dependent on their families. Participants in a new research project, however, think that can change.

Five sites around the state are now gearing up to evaluate the Indiana School-to-Work Collaborative, an innovative team approach that calls for embedding an employment specialist and other employment resources in the schools.

Indiana University's [Center on Community Living and Careers](#) at the Indiana Institute will coordinate operations and implementation of the School-to-Work Collaborative, thanks to a five-year, \$2.4 million research grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). NIDRR is a component of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

"We want to look at whether schools with embedded employment resources and a collaborative approach have better employment outcomes for young adults," said [Teresa Grossi](#), Director of the Center on Community Living and Careers and the study's principal investigator. The School-to-Work Collaborative will examine the number and type of jobs, average wages, and number of hours students work after they leave school as well as whether students and their families are more connected to resources and support services. "Additionally," Grossi said, "we will look at student gains in self-determination skills."

If successful, Indiana could replicate the model throughout the state and, hopefully, throughout the country, said Grossi, who noted, "One of the overarching goals of this research project is the sustainability of the model."

Key to the Indiana program's success will be the community provider employment specialist position embedded in the school and the collaboration of all the adult disability service providers. The employment specialist will act as a "single point of contact," connecting school staff and teachers as well as students and their families to state agencies like Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other community employment resources and organizations. Prior to their final year in high school, students at the five sites will participate in several internships where they will be immersed in the work environment and receive on-the-job supports.

The primary target group of the study is students with a disability who are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services support and who may be at risk for dropping out or who are having difficulty obtaining a diploma and leave school with a certificate of completion. The targeted group of students has many skills to offer but often has difficulty meeting some of the academic requirements for a diploma.

Students will also gain self-determination skills through a structured curriculum as part of the school program. "We'll focus on student employability skills," said Grossi, "things like job-specific skills but also what we refer to as the 'soft skills,' social skills, communication, decision-making, problem-solving and other things that often present problems for individuals with disabilities when they're trying to obtain or keep a job."

Families of students involved in the School-to-Work Collaborative will also receive information about and trainings on employment, benefits, work incentives and more from [IN*SOURCE](#), Indiana's parent and training information center.

State agencies and organizations supporting and participating in the project include the [Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitation Services](#); the [Department of Education, Office of Special Education](#); IN*SOURCE; [INAPSE](#), focused on employment first for individuals with disabilities; and [INARE](#), representing the

interests of Indiana disability service providers.

The five community teams, selected in February to begin creating their collaborative sites, are:

Carey Services, Marion, lead provider; Grant-Blackford Mental Health, Hillcroft Services, WorkOne, collaborative providers; Marion High School.

Easter Seals Crossroads, Indianapolis, lead provider; Sycamore Services, Noble of Indiana, collaborative providers; Ben Davis, Lawrence Central, and Pike high schools.

Evansville Arc, Evansville, lead provider; Sycamore Services and others, collaborative providers; Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp., selected schools.

Peak Community Services, Logansport, lead provider; Bona Vista, Cardinal Services, Four County Counseling Center, collaborative providers; Logansport High School.

Stone Belt Arc, Bedford, lead provider; CenterStone, LifeDesigns, collaborative providers, Bedford North Lawrence High School.

For more information, contact Teresa Grossi, Director, Center on Community Living and Careers at (812) 855-6508 or e-mail tgrossi@indiana.edu.

ACROSS THE COURTYARD



What to Consider When Looking for A Qualified ABA Provider

Like many approaches to serving individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an approach that focuses on helping people develop skills that are very difficult for them.

ABA does this by looking at factors in a person's world that undermine their success, and then carefully changing those factors to teach different and more appropriate ways of responding.

There is a lot of research that shows ABA works - not just for people with ASD or with disabilities, but with all children, adolescents and adults. In truth, while the goals may be different, ABA can be effective with any of us at any age.

Parents realizing the importance of early intervention and the research behind ABA, often have questions about choosing specific ABA programs and providers. As the demand has grown, so too has the number of options available. ABA providers and centers are multiplying across the state. In some areas of Indiana, the options are fewer or harder to access. In areas that offer a lot of options, parents often have a difficult time choosing the right center/provider for their child and family. Because these centers/providers use somewhat different approaches and interact with families in different ways, it is hard to know how to most effectively use their services.

This article is not intended as a critique or endorsement of any individual provider. Instead, our hope is to provide some

thoughts and criteria to guide your decision-making when choosing a provider to meet your child's and family's needs. Like you, we realize that each child is different. What works for one child may not work for yours. Our hope is that these guidelines will help you think through some issues that may be important as you explore options for your child and family. This guide will focus on the following issues:

Understanding What ABA Is (and What It Is Not)
Investigating Providers or Centers

[Click](#) to access the rest of the article. This article was written collaboratively by [Dr. Cathy Pratt](#), BCBA-D, [Indiana Resource Center for Autism](#), Dr. Susan Wilczynski, BCBA-D, [Ball State University](#), Kim Dodson and Michele Trivedi, [The Arc of Indiana](#), Dana Renay, [Autism Society of Indiana](#), and Dr. Angela Tomlin, [Riley Child Development Center](#).

COMINGS AND GOINGS



IAEYC Conference

The [Indiana Early Childhood Conference](#) is March 28th and 29th at the Indiana Convention Center. Staff of the Institute's [Early Childhood Center](#) (ECC) will be active throughout with presentations, booth in Exhibit Hall D, and leadership in the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (Indiana AEYC).

Friday, March 28, 2014

[Michael Conn-Powers](#), ECC Director, is Treasurer of the Indiana AEYC and participates in the Annual Meeting from 1:45 – 3:00 p.m. He will also participate in the Indiana AEYC Public Policy Academy from 3:15 – 4:30 p.m.

The ECC will be staffing Booth 425 in Exhibit Hall D from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The team will be disseminating their kindergarten readiness and other products while testing a new process. Friday morning and Saturday afternoon participants will be able to send themselves the products they would like by using an online kiosk system to send email product links to themselves. Friday afternoon and Saturday morning will use traditional paper dissemination. Electronic kiosks will be from 8:00 to 12:30 and paper dissemination 12:30 – 6:00 p.m.

[Katie Herron](#) and [Janet Ballard](#) will present "High Quality Outcomes for Early Intervention" at a "KnowLunch" from 12:45 to 1:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 29, 2013

The ECC will be staffing Booth 425 in Exhibit Hall D from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with paper dissemination from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and electronic kiosks from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m..

[Alice Frazier Cross](#) presents "Don't All Curricula Promote Learning?" from 8:00 to 9:15 a.m.

Michael Conn-Powers presents "The Quality of Free Choice Time" from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and at a "KnowLunch" from 12:45 to 1:30 p.m. on "Play Based Approaches, DAP and QRIS."

[Sue Dixon presents](#) "Reexamining the Classroom Day to Promote School Readiness" from 1:45 to 3:00 p.m..

Katie Herron and Janet Ballard present "High Quality Outcomes for Early Intervention" from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m.

IN BLOOMINGTON



City of Bloomington Sponsors Autism Program

March and April offer many opportunities to consider how welcoming our community is to people with disabilities. Bloomington joins communities across Indiana in observing March as Disability Awareness Month and April as Accessibility Awareness Month.

The program will be held on Tuesday, April 1 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of City Hall, 401 N. Morton Street. The program is free of charge and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

The event will include a panel discussion with experts in the field of autism. Chief Executive Officer Susan Rinne of LifeDesigns, Inc, an agency that provides services to people with disabilities, will moderate the discussion. Speakers include Dr. Dan Kennedy, Ph.D. in Neuroscience from the University of California, San Diego; Fritz Kruggel, Director of Behavior Supports for Indiana Mentor; [Kristie Brown Lofland](#), Educational Consultant at the Indiana Resource Center for Autism at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University; Mari Shawcroft, Coordinator of Behavior Support Services at Stone Belt; and Adria Nassim, a person living with autism spectrum disorder who received a degree in English from Brescia University, Owensboro, KY. The program will be followed by a question and answer session.

About one out of every 88 children in the United States currently have autism and about 36,500 of every four million children born each year in the United States will have autism. More people than ever before are being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, but it is not clear why. Some of this increase could be due to a broader definition of autism, better efforts in diagnosis or greater awareness of symptoms. Research shows that some groups are at higher-than-normal risk for the disorder. Data shows that boys are four to five times more likely than girls to have it. Among families that have one child with autism, there is a 2% to 8% chance that another sibling will as well.

Autism spectrum disorder commonly occurs with other disorders, such as fragile x syndrome (an inherited condition characterized by an X chromosome that is abnormally susceptible to damage) and tuberous sclerosis (a genetic disorder that causes non-malignant tumors to form in many different organs). Babies born extremely preterm and children of older parents are at higher risk. More research is needed to better understand why these factors increase autism.

For more information regarding the program, please contact Health Projects Manager Nancy Woolery at (812) 349-3851.

NEW LIBRARY COLLECTION ITEMS



Library Corner

Burton, D., & Kappenberg, J. (2013). Mathematics, the common core, and RTI: An integrated approach to teaching in today's classrooms. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Janney, R., Snell, M. E., & Janney, R. (2013). Teachers' guides to inclusive practices: Modifying schoolwork. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Pub.

Pe´rez, L. (2013). Mobile learning for all: Supporting accessibility with the iPad. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

These new materials may be borrowed from the [Center for Disability Information and Referral](#) (CeDIR) at the Institute. To check out materials, please call the library at 800-437-7924, send us an e-mail at cedir@indiana.edu, or come by and visit us at 1905 North Range Road in Bloomington.



Research, Education, and Service



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