

Overview of the Best Practice Guidelines in Autism

Best Practice Guidelines in Assessment, Program Planning, and ECSE Supplement for Individuals with Autism - January, 1999

Contributors These Guidelines were developed with the assistance of 12 individuals representing various disciplines across Iowa, coordinated by Sue Baker, Autism Services Consultant to the State of Iowa.

Background In April, 1995, the Area Education Agencies' Special Education Directors' Task Force on Autism created an action plan to develop a statewide strategy for addressing the issues governing the provision of special education and related services for children with autism* and its spectrum disorders.

Purpose Guidelines objective:

- Develop Guidelines for best practice in assessment and educational programming for students with autism
- Apply Guidelines to train Autism Resource Teams – Iowa's specialty teams that provide services to local Iowa schools

These Guidelines focus on:

- Assessment of individualized student needs
- Program planning

These Guidelines do not focus on:

- The diagnosis of autism

These Guidelines establish:

- A standard for ongoing training provided by the Regional Autism Services Program and equity of services across rural, less populated areas, and urban, and metropolitan regions.
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Progress Monitoring Numerous review processes were developed to monitor progress and consider feedback from community agencies. Community agencies included:

- Institutes of higher education
- Administrative law judges
- Protection and advocacy
- Various others

**Early Childhood
Special
Education
(ECSE)
Supplement**

The ECSE Supplement was developed as the result of a statewide Early Childhood Special Education initiative that included:

- Educators
 - Parents
 - Community providers
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**Role of Area
Education
Agencies (AEAs)**

Given the innovation configurations, we recognize that local education agencies (AEAs) are responsible for providing **Acceptable** or **Ideal** levels of service to students with autism. These Guidelines may assist providers in identifying when further support or training is needed. The Autism Resource Teams should have the knowledge, experience, and resources to provide this support.

**Who Benefits
from this
Information?**

Teams serving students with related conditions or behaviors including:

- Self-injurious behavior
 - Aggression
 - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
 - Tourette Syndrome
 - Fragile X
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
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Team Utilization

It is envisioned that a child's team use these documents as follows:

- As tools to lead to appropriate assessment which drives program decision-making
 - In the development of Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) / Individualized Education Plan (IEP) – site-based or home schooling – program reviews and third year reevaluations
 - Promote staff development and goal setting across the state
 - Access Autism Resource Teams or outside consultation in order to intervene and solve concerns
 - As an ongoing self assessment by staff or Autism Resource Teams, which all 180 Autism Resource Team members suggested as a priority use for documents
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*Any reference to autism in these documents will include autism spectrum disorders such as Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD.) Pervasive Development Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS.) Asperger Disorder, and Atypical Autism served in general or special education.