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Clinical Director's Column

Special points of

Interest:

- The CARD Team
- The need for increased funds
- www.centerforautism.org
- Email list
- Library materials

Hello, my name is Dr. Mae Barker, and I would like to take a moment to introduce myself as the new clinical director of the Jacksonville/UF CARD. I was born in Jacksonville, attended public school in both Nassau and Clay counties, and then completed my undergraduate degree at Jacksonville University. My decision to attend graduate school in psychology at Florida State University was prompted by my experiences serving children with autism. While an undergraduate, I had the fortunate opportunity to learn about Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and to deliver instruction to children with autism in their homes. This experience inspired me to not only learn more about autism, but to share with others information on how they could effectively teach individuals with disabilities. Before joining CARD, I worked as a behavior analyst consultant in schools and homes, conducted research on behavior safety and developmental disabilities, and developed a model for assessing the needs of preschool children with disabilities inclusive settings. I am excited to be at CARD where the staff all share a common interest in educating individuals on effective approaches to teaching individuals with autism and related disabilities.

The CARD Team

The CARD team includes professionals who have experience and knowledge in the fields of education, applied behavior analysis (ABA), speech/language pathology, medicine, and genetics. These professionals provide services such as training events, consultations in the home and school, referrals to community agencies, and technical assistance related to the educational planning of individuals with disabilities. Recently, we added two new educational coordinators to our team, Erin Swenson and Jinni Friend. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in psychology, Erin Swenson served as an ESE teacher at Lighthouse Learning Center and also worked as a community inclusion specialist. Jinni Friend has taught children with autism and other disabilities in preschool, elementary, and middle school settings. She obtained her masters of education degree from University of South Carolina.

The Need for Increased Funds

In the past year, your local CARD has provided direct services to 674 individuals with autism and related disabilities. As the number of autism cases increase, it is becoming increasingly challenging to deliver high-quality services to all those in need. Despite the 142% increase in statewide CARD clients over the past 5 years, the CARD budget has not been increased.

For this reason, we are asking for your help in increasing CARD's budget by writing letters to your legislator in support of CARD. On our website and in our lobby are flyers that explain how to write letters to your local legislators. With additional funds, we could add to our library collection, increase the number of CARD staff, and develop online training programs for educators and parents.

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WWW.CENTERFORAUTISM.ORG

Visit our website (www.centerforautism.org) for access to CARD information, staff contacts, directions to our center, helpful links, etc. A regularly updated training calendar will also be posted on our site. In the future, we hope to use our website for online support groups and trainings.

EMAIL LIST:

To be placed on CARD's email list for information on upcoming trainings, discussion groups, and events, contact Jeannie Bowles at jeannie.bowles@jax.ufl.edu or call 904-737-5239.

Library Materials

At the CARD office, we have a collection of books and audiovisual materials for parents and teachers to borrow. Recently, we obtained two new audio-visual materials: *Going to the Heart of Autism: The Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) Program DVD* and *Teaching Verbal Behavior: An Introduction to Parents Teaching Language*. These two new materials can only be viewed at CARD or checked out for two days with a deposit from the borrower.

Sadly, we are missing many books from our lending library. If you have CARD library materials, then please return them to the CARD office so others may benefit from using these materials. As reminder, per our lending agreement, we ask that you return materials within 2 weeks. In the event that an item is damaged or destroyed, we ask that you replace the item or pay for the cost of the item's replacement.

Group Discussions

Adolescent Asperger Group: Group will meet on 10/03/05, 11/07/05, 12/05/05 from 4:00pm—5:30pm at the CARD Center. Please contact Dr. Tapia to register at (904) 737-5239. This group will meet to discuss issues that face Adolescents with Asperger Syndrome.

Adult Asperger Group: Please join us on the once a month to discuss issues that face adults with Asperger Syndrome. Meetings will be on 10/10/05, 11/14/05, 12/12/05 from 6:30pm—8:00pm at the CARD office. Please call Dr. Tapia at 737-5239 to participate in this group.

Two Feet Forward: This school to work program will discuss self-determination issues, will develop real life profiles, interest inventories, leisure skills, work experiences and partnerships for time-limited work opportunities. This group will also explore job options and write resumes. This group will meet on 10/04/05, 11/01/05, 12/05/05 from 6:30pm—8:30pm at the CARD office. Please call Anne Wilson to register for this group at 737-5239.

Sibshop: Brothers and sisters of children with autism now have the opportunity to meet and talk with other kids whose brothers and sisters have autism. Besides peer support, this group provides participants with an opportunity to learn more about their siblings disability. At this group, siblings will be able to share these and other feelings with others who will truly understand. Group will meet on 10/12/05, 10/26/05, 11/09/05, 11/23/05, 12/07/05 from 3:30pm—5:00pm at the CARD office. Register by calling Dr. Tapia at 737-5239.

Social Skills Group: Is it difficult for your child to make friends? Is it difficult for your child to keep friends? Does your child have a problem "fitting in" with the peer group? Does he/she spend too much time on solitary activities, such as video games and computers? If you answered "YES" to any of the above questions, then you should consider enrolling your child in the social skills group. Through direct instruction and group learning activities, such as role play and group discussion, your child will learn the social skills necessary to make friends, to keep friends, to "fit in", and to experience the fun of playing with other children. The group will meet on 10/19/05, 11/02/05, 11/16/05, 11/30/05, 12/14/05 from 3:30pm—5:00pm at the CARD office. Please call Dr. Tapia to register at 737-5239.

Training Schedule

Date	Time	Training Topic	Presenter
09/27/05	5:00pm-7:00pm	Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders	M. Barker
10/04/05	9:00am-11:00am	Potty Training Workshop for Families	A. Wilson
10/04/05	5:00pm-8:00pm	Addressing Challenging Behaviors: Developing Behavior Support Plans	M. Barker
10/11/05	5:00pm-7:00pm	Teaching Language Skills/Verbal Behavior	M. Barker
10/25/05	5:00pm-7:00pm	Teaching Language Skills/Verbal Behavior	E. Swenson
11/08/05	3:00pm-5:00pm	Creative approaches to teaching social skills	A. Wilson
11/22/05	3:00pm-5:00pm	Teaching functional skills during everyday routines	M. Barker

Descriptions

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders – This session provides an overview of autism spectrum disorders and implications for instructional planning.

Potty Training Workshop for Families – This in-depth workshop is geared for parents who need advice and guidance in toilet training their young child.

Addressing Challenging Behaviors Using Functional Behavioral Assessment – This workshop is for parents and in-home service providers. Attendees will learn (1) how Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) information is used to create a behavior support plan, (2) how to collect FBA information.

Teaching Language Skills/Verbal Behavior for Early Learners – The first part of the session will be on methods for teaching language skills to children with autism and related disabilities. The second half of the session will be devoted to discussion, and the facilitator will provide advice and information per the requests of the group.

Teaching Language Skills/Verbal Behavior for Advanced Learners – The first part of the session will be on methods for teaching language skills to children with autism and related disabilities. The second half of the session will be devoted to discussion, and the facilitator will provide advice and information per the requests of the group.


Creative approaches to teaching social skills – This workshop will focus on ways to teach social skills during everyday routines. Attendees will learn how to (1) identify social skills deficits in need of instruction, (2) capitalize on opportunities to teach social skills, and (3) create teaching situations.

Teaching Functional Life Skills – This workshop will focus on ways to teach functional life skills such as stopping at a crosswalk, brushing one's teeth, and making lunch. Attendees will learn how to (1) identify life skills deficits in need of instruction and (2) systematically teach such skills.

R.S.V.P.: All trainings are free and open to parents, teachers, caregivers and anyone else interested. Please contact the CARD office at 737-5239 to register for these exciting trainings. Low pre-registration may cause a workshop to be rescheduled.

Reminder: CARD staff are regularly scheduling training events per requests of schools, parent groups, and organizations at locations in the community. Please check out our training calendar on our website or call our center for information on upcoming events.

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We are on the Web!!
www.centerforautism.org

Check out our Website

We have recently updated our website. Please check it out for the latest information on upcoming events, CARD information, helpful links and staff contacts.

www.centerforautism.org