

Direct Connection



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Online Training Available

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER TRAINING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

The need for autism-specific training for public safety personnel is evidenced both nationally and locally. Almost daily, AMBER Alerts are issued for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who have wandered from their homes. And, much too frequently, the search for those children ends with tragic results. Also, without specialized training, misunderstandings, miscommunications, or mishandling of situations could occur and cause harm including injury and death to first responders and/or to individuals with ASD.

Through the support of the Missouri Department of Mental Health, the Office of Autism Services partnered with Dennis Debbaudt, a nationally known expert on this subject, and the University of Missouri Extension, Fire and Rescue Training Institute, to produce *Autism Spectrum Disorder Training for Public Safety*, a web-based training module that meets continuing education requirements for Missouri peace officers and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.

This training aims to provide credible information to public safety personnel who might encounter individuals with autism spectrum disorder in a "first responder" role, minimizing risk to all involved and maximizing positive outcomes of such encounters. It will be offered to users at no cost for a period of three years through the University of Missouri Extension's online learning program.

To access this training, click on: <http://mufrti.org/online/index.shtml>.

**March 2017
VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2**

CONNECTING WITH THE DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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Mental Health

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Disabilities

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2017 Mental Health Champions' Awards Banquet

The Mental Health Champions' Banquet is scheduled for Wednesday, June 14, 2017. The annual event will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, 415 W. McCarty Street, Jefferson City, Missouri.

The Mental Health Champions' Award recognizes individuals living with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and addiction disorders who make positive contributions to their communities, exemplify commitment and vision, and whose actions have increased the potential for independence in others with similar mental health conditions.

The banquet also provides an opportunity to come together to share a common goal — to raise awareness and increase public understanding about matters impacting individuals and families living with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and addiction disorders.

The keynote speaker will be Lee Woodruff, wife of Bob Woodruff, former co-anchor of ABC's World News Tonight who was severely wounded in a roadside bomb attack in Iraq. Woodruff has penned multiple best-selling books and is a contributing reporter for CBS This Morning. Lee and Bob Woodruff are founders of the Bob Woodruff Family Fund for Traumatic Brain Injury.

For more information, call the Missouri Mental Health Foundation at 573-635-9201 or visit: <http://www.missouriamhf.org/page.do?id=193>

GAO Roundtable Discusses Transition for Youth with Autism

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on the results of a roundtable discussion on the needs of transition-age autistic youth. The roundtable was made up of 24 panelists, including adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), service providers, researchers, and parents of youth with ASD. Panelists addressed the services and supports transitioning youth with ASD need to attain their goals for adulthood, and they discussed how youth with ASD can be fully integrated into society. The panel described the services and supports that youth with ASD may need to help them achieve five goals for adulthood: obtaining postsecondary education; securing employment; maximizing independent living; maintaining health and safety; and increasing opportunities for community integration.

To support a successful transition into adulthood, the panel said “youth need to be able to access services that are individualized, timely, equitable, and community- and evidence-based,” and “address the variation in autism characteristics and any changes over a person's lifetime.” The panel said “transitioning youth with ASD need equitable access to services regardless of their race, gender, family income, or location.” The panel also emphasized “the need for services within youths' local communities in order to foster access and community involvement.”

To improve the ability of youth with autism to fully integrate into society, the panel cited “the need for a new approach to providing supports and better public understanding of autism,” placing “a shared responsibility for inclusion on both society and youth with ASD.” The panel also said that “widespread knowledge of autism could lead to better understanding of autistic youths' potential and enhance their chances of attaining it.”

The full report is available at: <http://www.gao.gov/assets/690/680525.pdf>.



“Things work out best for those who make the best of how things work out.”

-John Wooden





Autism Waiver Expiration

The Autism Waiver will expire, effective June 30, 2017. The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) began operating the Home and Community-Based Autism Waiver in July 2009 and, among other services, included applied behavior analysis (ABA) for the first time. Individuals eligible for the Autism Waiver had to be between the ages of three and nineteen with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

In October 2015, Missouri began offering coverage for ABA services under state plan Medicaid for children with autism spectrum disorder. Since individuals must access Medicaid state plan services through MO HealthNet before seeking Medicaid Waiver services, a decision was made to permit the Autism Waiver to expire and to transition individuals currently enrolled in the Autism Waiver to the Community Support Waiver. There will be no loss of coverage for these individuals as all services currently available in the Autism Waiver are available in the Community Support Waiver.

Spotlight on Michael Dowell

Michael Dowell, age 37, lives in his own home and raises tropical fish. Michael has autism and receives services through the Audrain Developmental Disabilities Services.



Michael enjoys cleaning his fish tanks.

Autism Awareness Rally

On Tuesday, February 21, the annual Autism Awareness Rally, sponsored by the Missouri Parent Advisory Committee on Autism, was held at the Missouri State Capitol. The event was emceed by Nikki Straw, longtime autism advocate and representative from Joplin. Committee organizers included Marilyn Cox, Chair of the Missouri Parent Advisory Committee on Autism; Nikki Straw; and Candy Kelly, representative from Joplin, with volunteer assistance from the provider community.

The program included presentations from Aaron Likens, National Ambassador for Autism, Easters Seals Midwest; Representative Charlie Davis, District 128; Dr. Melissa King, Executive Director of the Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) Autism Center; Kelly Pujol, Music Therapist; Sarah Gentry, Policy Director, Missouri Health Care for All; Scott Bucher, Parent Mentor for Missouri Parents Act (MPACT); and Missouri State Treasurer Eric Schmitt. Treasurer Schmitt has long championed the cause for those affected with autism spectrum disorder and, as senator, sponsored autism insurance legislation that included applied behavior analysis (ABA) coverage for children with ASD covered under group policies in Missouri.

The event was concluded with an individual with ASD singing “The Star Spangled Banner” a cappella. Individuals then visited legislators to thank them for their continued support of the autism community.



Michael makes friends with public safety officers in his community.

Community Calendar

April 19- 20, 2017 – Tiered Supports Training, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, Missouri

For more information you may view the [flyer](#) or visit the website at: <http://dmh.mo.gov/dd/tieredsupports.html>

April 21 - 23, 2017 – People First of Missouri Conference 2017, “Spring Into Action” – Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach, Missouri

For more information, click on: www.missouripeoplefirst.org

May 22 - 23, 2017 – Save the Date – 27th Annual Aging with Developmental Disabilities Conference

More information will be available soon on AADD’s website: <http://agingwithdd.org/>

June 14, 2017 – 2017 Missouri Mental Health Champions Banquet, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, Missouri

For more information, click on: http://www.missourimhf.org/?page_id=353

MISSOURI DIVISION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES



Improving lives THROUGH
supports and services
THAT FOSTER self-determination.

DIVISION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES

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Fostering Self-determination



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MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH