

**Services for Students with
Autism Spectrum Disorders**

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MEETING THE CHALLENGE


V-CASE SPRING CONFERENCE
MAY 2011



Topics for Today

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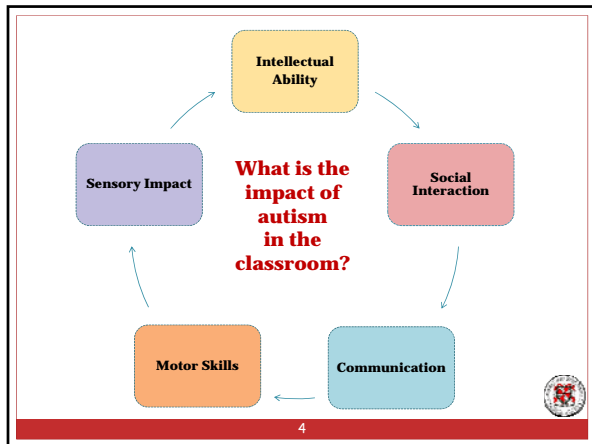
- The Challenges
- Implications on Policy and Programs
- Practical Solutions
- What the Future Holds



Autism

③

THE CHALLENGES



Autism

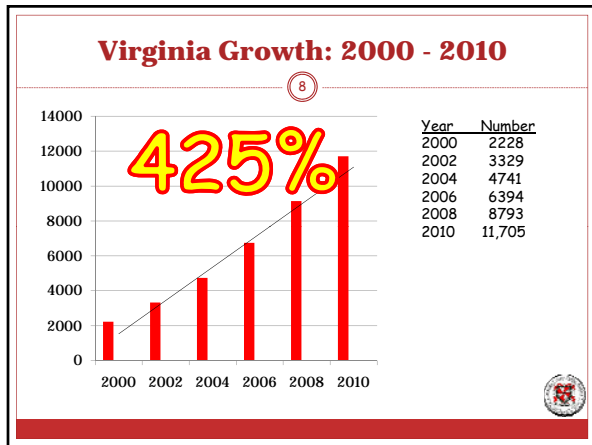
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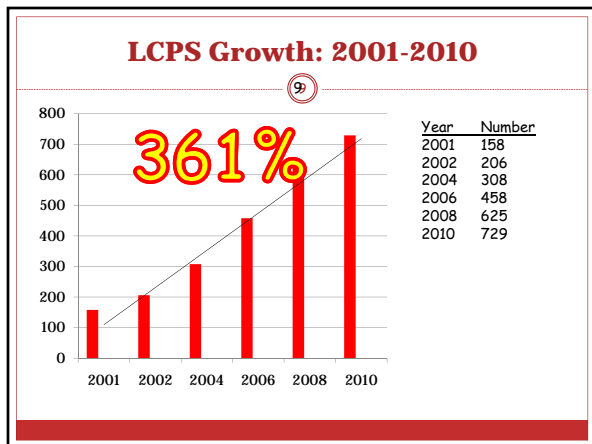
IMPLICATIONS ON POLICY AND PROGRAMS

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released a new study stating that autism now affects 1 in every 110 American children and 1 in 70 boys.







What Does This Rapid Growth Mean?

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The need for:

- Strategic, long range planning
- Expanded programs and services
- Teacher preparation and training
- Knowledge of federal and state legislation

Federal and State Legislation

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Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Free and appropriate public education (FAPE)
- Least restrictive educational setting (LRE)
 - Continuum of special services
- Special instructional services, accommodations and modifications, and related services

State:

- State-mandated class ratios
- Assessment requirements



Strategic Planning

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- Establish division-wide goals and priorities
 - High quality services
 - Time, resources, money
- Develop comprehensive service delivery models
- Focus on evidence-based practices

Focus of Services

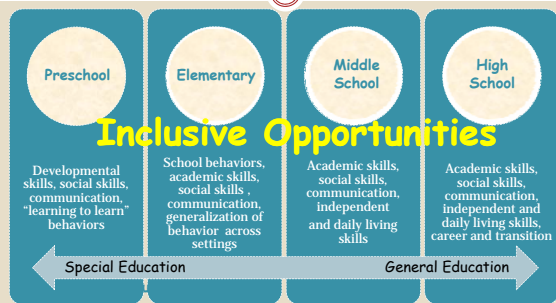
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Designed for students, ages 2-22, whose primary disabilities are in the areas of language, communication, cognition, and socialization.

Emphasis on skill development and application in the least restrictive environment.

Service Delivery

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Autism

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PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS



Practical Solutions

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Comprehensive Service Plan


- Collaboration
- Training
- Resources
- Support



Comprehensive Service Plan

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Collaboration	Training	Resources	Support
Families	Understanding the Disability	Instructional Materials	Resource Staff
Staff Members	Assessment Progress Monitoring	Staff Resource Materials	Local Administration
Providers	Curriculum	System-wide Guidelines and Procedures	Central Administration
Agencies and Universities	Established and Emerging Practices	Local, State, and National Information	
	Behavior Management		



Staff Development Focus: Autism Services

Understanding the Disability	Assessment and Progress Monitoring	Established and Emerging Practices	Curriculum	Behavior Management
Characteristics of Students with Autism	Assessment and Documentation	Instructional Practices to Improve Outcomes for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Functional Literacy in the Home and Community	Classroom Organization and Structure
Addressing the Unique Needs of Students with High Functioning Autism and Asperger's Syndrome	Functional Behavior Assessment	Strategies to Supports Students with ASD at School, Home, and Community	Functional Communication	Systematic Teaching: Practices in Applied Behavioral Analysis and Discrete Trial Teaching
Affect of the Core Deficits in Autism on Understanding and Relatedness	Behavior Intervention Plan	Best Practices in Transitioning Students	A Framework for Teaching Social Skills	Structured Teaching: Principles and Applications
The Affect of Executive Functioning in Autism on Learning and Living		Strategies to Promote Social/Flexible Thinking and Behavior	Supporting Instruction: Thematic Units	

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Evidence-Based Practices and Interventions

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- National Research Council (2001)
Educating Children with Autism
 - Commissioned by NAS to examine practices
 - <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309072697>


- National Autism Center (2009)
National Standards Report
 - Scientifically-based treatments
 - www.nationalautismcenter.org

National Standards Report

Practices Applied in LCPS

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Established Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Interventions • Schedules • Story-based Interventions
Emerging Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Device • Picture Exchange Communication System • Social Skills Training • Structured Teaching



SKILL COMPETENCIES FOR
PROFESSIONALS AND
PARAPROFESSIONALS IN VIRGINIA
SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH
AUTISM ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

VIRGINIA

AUTISM COUNCIL

Skill Competencies for Professionals and Paraprofessionals

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- Developed by the Virginia Autism Council (Revised 2010)
- Knowledge and Skill Areas
 - General Autism
 - Environmental Structure and Visual Supports
 - Comprehensive Instructional Programming
 - Communication
 - Social Skills
 - Behavior
 - Sensory Motor Development
 - Independence and Aptitude

<http://www.autismtrainingva.org/>



Using VAC Skill Competencies to Build Capacity

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- Training Survey
- VAC Skill Competencies Survey
- Skill Tracking Form

Focus of Training	Within LCPS (Check)	Other Location (Specify)	Year of Training	Hours of Training
Applied Behavior Analysis				
Augmentative/Alternative Communication				
Autism Spectrum Disorders: Characteristics and Strategies				
Communication Strategies				
Differentiated Instruction				
Discrete Trial Teaching				
FBA/BIP				
Inclusive Practices				
Life Skills				
Literacy Skills				
Mandt: Relational and Technical				
Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)				
Social Skills Strategies				
Structured Teaching (TEACCH)				
Visual Supports/Strategies				

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VAC Competency Sections	Yes	No
Section 1. General Autism Competencies		
Section 2. Environmental Structure and Visual Supports Competencies		
Section 3. Comprehensive Instructional Programming Competency Statements		
Section 4. Communication Competencies		
Section 5. Social Skills Competencies		
Section 6. Behavior Competencies		
Section 7. Sensory Motor Development Competencies		
Section 8. Independence and Aptitude Competencies		

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Tracking Form		Event
Section 4. Communication Competencies		
4.1K Understands components of communication and its impact on the day-to-day experience of an individual with autism and how to assess skills for intervention planning		
4.1.1S Uses informal and formal tools to assess and analyze both receptive and expressive communication (ex: verbal, nonverbal, content, speech, semantics, and pragmatics).		
4.1.2S Determines the functions (ex: request, comment, question, negate) and frequency of communication across all life environments.		
4.1.3S Determines the form of communication (ex: verbal, gestures, visuals) and considers augmentative communication options that are based on individual need and strengths.		
4.1.4S Solicits information from all members of the individual's collaborative program development team (anyone who supports, works with, or provides consultation).		

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1. General Autism Competencies Statements	Para-professional / Direct Services Staff	Professional / Direct Service Staff	Master Professional / Direct Service Staff	Advanced Degree/ Program Developer Specialist
1.1K Understands the characteristics and diagnosis of autism as defined by the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual and definition/description of the Virginia Department of Education.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.1S Lists and explains the defining characteristics of autism (Communication, patterns of stereotypical behavior, socialization and social skill development) and the impact on the individual.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.2S Lists and explains the associated characteristics commonly present in autism (ex: difficulties in sensory processing, motor skills, theory of mind, and imitation) and the impact on the individual.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.3S Lists and explains the associated cognitive characteristics and learning styles commonly present in autism (ex: difficulties in executing functioning, attending, planning, abstract thinking, problem solving) and the impact on the individual.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.4S Describes typical child development (ex: communication, sensory motor, cognitive, behavior, and social skill development).	✓	✓	✓	✓

Virginia Autism Council

Five Essential Components of a Quality Autism Program

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- Staff are trained in three areas of competency
 - > goals
 - > strategies
 - > activities
- Student educational plans are aligned with assessed needs based upon data
- Instructional programs are based upon evidence-based methods and strategies
- Well-designed activities target evolving objectives
- Effective communication between staff and family

(AutismPro, 2009)

Focus of Instruction for Students

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- Literacy and numeracy
- Social and communication skills
- Inclusive opportunities
- Application of skills into daily living activities



Professional Development Focus

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- Behavioral Supports
- Inclusive Practices
- Social Skills



Professional Development

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- Awareness workshops for school staff
 - Strategies to support inclusive practices
 - Characteristics – Asperger 's Syndrome
- Evening and weekend workshops – strategies and materials
 - Monthly autism teacher inservices
 - Structured teaching
 - Systematic teaching
 - Functional communication



"A Climate for Success"
LOUDOUN COUNTY
Public Schools

LCPS Autism Training
2010-2011

<p>AutismPro Awareness Training</p> <p>Total time commitment: 3 hours in September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered to all elementary schools in September • Focus on greater understanding of autism spectrum disorders • Online workshops offered to unassigned staff members on their own time (two hours) • Discussions led by school staff prior (one hour) • Registration through HLP 	<p>AutismPro Fundamentals Training Professional Learning Community (PLC)</p> <p>Total time commitment: 10 hours over the course of the school year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered to all elementary schools from October through May • Focus on interventions used with young children with autism spectrum disorders • Online workshops offered to unassigned staff members on their own time (two hours per quarter; 8 hours) • Group discussions support and reinforce online learning (one hour per quarter; 4 hours) • Registration through HLP 	<p>AutismPro Course Autism Spectrum Disorders: Educational Practices for Paraprofessionals and Teachers New to Autism</p> <p>Total time commitment: approximately 6.5 hours from October through May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available to all elementary school paraprofessionals or teachers new to autism • Open to all other teachers and resources offered through AutismPro • 4.5 online hours • 2 face-to-face hours • Must be schools and mandated by the instructor • Certificate awarded by successful completion of course • End-of-course project required and shared at final class meeting • University course credit under consideration • Course tuition funded by LCPS • Course registration through HLP
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For more information, contact Executive Management/Planning or Growth and Self-Improvement

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The Partnership

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Loudoun County
Public Schools

George Mason
University



Collaborative Teacher Training Initiatives

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- George Mason University
 - Autism Certificate (graduate program)
- George Washington University
 - Secondary Social Skills Curriculum (5 year grant)
- Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia Dept. of Education
 - Pre-K and elementary teacher preparation (2 year grant)



Job-Embedded Support

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- School-based, job-embedded support for teachers
 - Consulting teachers
 - Mentor/coach program



The Key is ~
Capacity
Building



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Autism

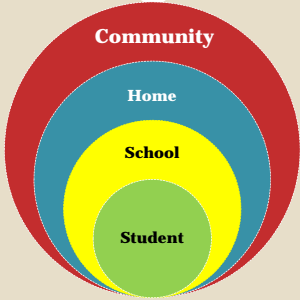
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WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS



Expanding the Net

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Community

Home

School


Student



By the Year 2020

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- Causal factors of autism will be identified
 - Medical, nutritional, and sensory
- Medical insurance coverage will be expanded to include in-home services and therapies
- University coursework in autism will be required for students in education and related fields of study
- Established practices will be identified to address specific characteristics of autism and will be used with fidelity
- Alternative, un-validated practices will no longer be used with students/children on the spectrum!



Resources

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- Autism Society of America
<http://www.autism-society.org/>
- Autism Speaks
<http://www.autismspeaks.com/>
- Division TEACCH: Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped CHildren
<http://www.teacch.com/>
- Virginia Autism Council
<http://www.autismtrainingva.org/>

Contact Information

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Rosemarie McGuinness, Autism Specialist
Rosemarie.mcguinness@lcps.org

Connie Smith, Special Education Supervisor
Connie.smith@lcps.org

Loudoun County Public Schools
21000 Education Court
Ashburn, VA 20148

Closing

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- **10 Things Every Child With Autism Wishes You**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbeyIG7Fz8s&feature=fvw>