

Members

Rep. Cleo Duncan, Chairperson  
Rep. Phil Hinkle  
Rep. Vanessa Summers  
Rep. Dennis Tyler  
Sen. Marvin Riegsecker  
Sen. Ryan Mishler  
Sen. Allie Craycraft  
Sen. Connie Sipes  
Don Bayne  
Mary Rosswurm  
Herbert Grulke  
Hugh Beebe  
Michael Carmin  
Leah Helvering



# INDIANA COMMISSION ON AUTISM

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## MEETING MINUTES<sup>1</sup>

Meeting Date: September 21, 2006  
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.  
Meeting Place: Riley Hospital Outpatient Center  
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana  
Meeting Number: 2

**Members Present:** Rep. Cleo Duncan, Chairperson; Rep. Phil Hinkle; Rep. Vanessa Summers; Rep. Dennis Tyler; Sen. Marvin Riegsecker; Don Bayne; Mary Rosswurm; Herbert Grulke; Hugh Beebe; Leah Helvering.

**Members Absent:** Sen. Ryan Mishler; Sen. Allie Craycraft; Sen. Connie Sipes; Michael Carmin.

Chairperson Duncan called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Commission members introduced themselves.

Vincent LaMarca, Behavior/Program Consultant for the Lovaas Institute, presented information concerning Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and training in evidence-based practices for children with autism. He is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. He informed the Commission that there is a recognized certification process for behavior analysts in six

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

states (Florida, California, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Texas) and a voluntary certification process for other states. He stated that there is currently no state certification process for behavior analysts in Indiana.

Mr. LaMarca also discussed his research on the Lovaas Model of Applied Behavior Analysis and current training practices at the Lovaas Institute. He explained how the Lovaas Model of Applied Behavior Analysis has undergone rigorous research, proving its effectiveness in teaching children with autism with research as early as 1966 and as recently as April 2006. The training consists of four basic levels of certification for those who provide one-to-one treatment. Obtaining certification at each level requires demonstration of performance-based objectives. Categories of certification include: (1) basic therapy technique, (2) advanced therapy techniques, (3) data collection procedures, and (4) training other employees. [Exhibit A]

Mr. LaMarca presented the following recommendations for the Commission members' consideration:

- (1) Establish a certification process for behavior analysts in the state of Indiana.
- (2) Use the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's process as a starting point for state licensure.
- (3) Require that state money devoted to teacher training is only spent if performance-based objectives will be used to determine the quality and outcomes of the training that took place.
- (4) Require that at least one school employee per school district is licensed as a behavior analyst (within three years after the state creates a licensing process).
- (5) Be wary of regulations that make it difficult for undergraduates or parents to help within the classroom.
- (6) Require low student/teacher ratios in classrooms devoted to children with autism (no more than two young children per adult as recommended by the national Committee on Educational Interventions for Children with Autism <http://darwin.nap.edu/books/0309072697/html/219.html>).
- (7) Make sure applied behavior analysis, or behavioral treatment, is an approved treatment in any state funding.
- (8) Keep the autism insurance mandate in place as written.

In response to Commission members' questions, Mr. LaMarca suggested that there be one aide in the classroom per autistic student and that the type of licensure obtained in behavior analysis be commensurate to the type of background the individual has (i.e. experience, academics, professional, or paraprofessional).

Dr. Naomi Swiezy, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry and Clinical Director, Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center (Center), discussed and presented information concerning autism screening. [Exhibit B] In response to Commission members questions concerning whether medical students should be given training on how to assess and diagnose autism, Dr. Swiezy explained that the national medical boards dictate the curriculum for the medical school. She stated that the residency program for individuals pursuing pediatrics, family practice, and dentistry for the developmentally disabled may be the best place to expose students to specific training in autism.

Dr. Swiezy discussed ways in which the Center has tried to raise the awareness of autism including: (1) sponsoring an annual conference for practicing physicians, (2) collaborating with the Indiana Department of Education's Task Force on Autism Spectrum Disorders to develop a survey for medical professionals in order to gauge their knowledge of autism

and their amount of referrals, (3) developing a toolkit as a basic reference for parents and professionals as well as a resource for sharing basic information between the parents, educators, medical professionals, and others working directly with children with autism, and (4) developing a booklet that includes autism basics for medical professionals and other practitioners.

Dan Ryan, Director of the Regional Autism Center at Logan, presented information concerning the Regional Autism Center at Logan (The Logan Center). The Logan Center is a collaborative effort between families, volunteers, and professionals from the medical, educational and service provider communities. The Logan Center provides information, training and resources on a variety of approved developmental teaching approaches. The Logan Center offers the following services: (1) family support group, (2) social skills classes, (3) teen group, (4) assistance to parents to develop and implement Applied Behavioral Analysis home programs and training for families, volunteers and school personnel, (5) P.L.A.Y. Project- home consulting program that provides training and support for families of children with autism, (6) behavior consultation, (7) sibling support. [Exhibit C]

Liz Freeman Floyd, Indiana Autism Coalition, presented an update concerning the status of the Indiana comprehensive plan on autism. She stated the Coalition is still collecting and compiling data from across the state and expects to have a rough draft available by mid-October and a final draft available by January of 2007. She highlighted the following issues to be addressed in the plan: (1) lack of appropriate services for behavioral intervention and crisis intervention, (2) limited availability of service providers, (3) limited access to assessment, diagnosis and treatment, (4) physicians' lack of willingness to confirm a diagnosis of autism, (5) the disconnect between the state Division of Disabilities and Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Education, and (6) lack of training for service providers. She presented the following recommendations for legislative involvement: (1) full funding for the true cost of early childhood special education programming (ages 3-5), (2) mandating year round programming and an extended school day for those who cannot be served in traditional child care settings, (3) mandating behavioral training for first responders, educators, medical students, and all service providers, including those in the foster care, First Steps, mental health, and residential programs and settings as well as judges and Department of Correction personnel, and (4) Funding and incentives at the university level to create capacity and incentives for young people to look into professions that will serve the needs of the autism community.

Kim Dodson, Indiana Autism Resource Center, distributed the following information to the Commission members: (1) 3,054 people are on the Autism Waiver Waiting List, (2) 331 people are receiving Autism Waivers, (3) 3,425 people are receiving Support Services Waivers, and (4) 10,064 people are on the Support Services waiting list as of July 2006. [Exhibit D]

The next two meeting dates for the Commission will be October 6, 2006 and October 26, 2006. Each meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. in Room 233 of the State House.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.