

START

Intensive Training

The Statewide Autism Resources and Training Project (START) Intensive Training focuses on evidence-based practices to increase knowledge and skills that enhance the educational programming and outcomes for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and related disabilities from preschool through post high school.

Intensive training is provided to multidisciplinary teams including teachers, administrators, ancillary staff, community partners, and parents. Each team is comprised of six individuals who attend each training session and work collaboratively to develop implementation plans for target students, classrooms, programs, and school buildings.

- ▶ **Early Childhood Intensive Training**
- ▶ **K-12 Intensive Training**
- ▶ **Building Your Future Intensive Training**

Eligible applications include Intermediate School Districts, Local Education Agencies, and Public School Academies with preference given to schools and districts:

- that demonstrate a significant need for training and support.
- with high numbers of students with ASD.
- in geographic areas that have not received START Intensive Training recently.
- that work in collaboration with other schools, local agencies, or other organizations.
- that have applied to START previously but could not be accommodated in the schedule.

Early Childhood Training Curriculum

One - Year Training Commitment

Module 1: Orientation to the Training Series and Setting Expectations for Independence (1 day)

This module covers the primary components of the START program early childhood intensive training along with the evidence-based practices for supporting young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in early childhood. In the presentation, we will define clear expectations for children and staff across activities with methods for assessing and teaching expectations. Participants will learn to collect data on child independence during routines.

Module 2: The Ten Essentials for Teaching Young Children with ASD and Related Disabilities (1 day)

This presentation emphasizes the use of evidence-based strategies for increasing learning opportunities and engagement for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and related disabilities across activities. Effective instructional strategies for teaching will be presented including pairing, prompting, and reinforcement. Participants will learn to incorporate learning and communication opportunities across the day through intentional planning of routines and visual supports. This presentation will provide classroom behavior support strategies to prevent, teach, reinforce, and respond to behaviors as a team. An early childhood assessment tool will be reviewed as a way to evaluate current program components.

Module 3: Structuring Learning Groups and Communication Across the Day (1 day)

This training module will provide strategies to address a range of child learning abilities and needs. Participants will learn a system for addressing multiple goals within learning activities and to differentiate instruction across activities. The module will present strategies to develop functional communication systems and teach communication skills, including manding and shaping new communication behaviors.

Module 4: Active Engagement in Circle Time and Successful Toilet Training (1 day)

This module will address learning opportunities and engagement during circle time, including fun activities to incorporate into circle. Participants will learn about active child responding and utilizing strategies taught in previous modules, such as differentiating instruction and behavior support during circle and large group time. A problem-solving tool and data collection strategies will be introduced to assist teams to increase active responding. Participants will also learn strategies for teaching toileting behaviors and other adaptive skills that promote independence.

Module 5: Teaching Play Skills and Promoting Social Interaction Across Activities (1 day)

This module outlines strategies used to increase learning opportunities to promote play skills in young children. Participants will learn to individualize strategies for specific children as well as creating activities relevant to an entire class. A variety of strategies will be presented including scripted play, video modeling, reciprocal imitation, observational play, structuring play centers, organizing free play, and peer training. In this module, we will share practices and strategies that promote inclusion and peer interaction. Activities for promoting learning opportunities and social interaction during meals will be presented. In the final part of the module, participants will review their learning from the training series and create a plan for continued implementation.

K-12 Training Curriculum

Two - Year Training Commitment

Year One Modules

Module 1: Orientation, Foundations in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and the Teaming Process (2 days)

This module provides participants with an orientation to the START Project and an overview of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) including current characteristics and definitions; learning characteristics associated with ASD, etiologies and research in the area of ASD. The module also includes information on evidence-based practices for students with ASD as well as the importance of family involvement in educational planning. The Teaming Process includes a problem solving format that can be applied to team decision making efforts, and participants will learn how this process can be readily applied to student educational planning and behavior plan meetings.

Module 2: Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS) (2 days)

This module outlines a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) model that includes strategies for using the characteristics and intense interests of students with ASD to enhance engagement & independence and reduce behavioral challenges. Participants will learn the principles of behavioral science and how to use this information to develop and implement other preventative evidence-based interventions and scripts including visual schedules and functional communication systems. This module will also address strategies for responding effectively to behavioral challenges and how to write break protocol and develop emergency procedures and scripts for students with unsafe behavior. Evaluation procedures and processes will also be discussed.

Module 3: Educational Supports and Strategies for Students with ASD (2 days)

This module provides participants with a foundation of educational strategies that build upon the strengths of students with ASD that lead to successful learning. Participants are provided an opportunity to experience ASD through sensitivity awareness activities which lead to a better understanding of the learning challenges for these students. Participants also learn to provide curricular accommodations and differentiation so students with ASD have access to appropriate grade-level curriculum. A framework for developing an individualized academic differentiation and grading plan for a student with ASD as well as practice in creating such a plan is provided.

Module 4: Peer to Peer Support for Students with ASD (2 days)

This module provides participants information about systems for establishing a peer to peer support program to increase opportunities for students with ASD to access general education settings and curriculum. Peers model typical academic and social behavior in educational environments throughout the school day and provide support for students with ASD to promote independence and socialization. Peer to peer support programs and inclusion of students with ASD not only impacts outcomes for students with ASD, but has a powerful impact on typical peers and at risk students. The specific steps for developing a peer to peer support program will be presented including: recruitment, training & maintenance and includes the concept of medium of exchange as a way to connect students.

Module 5: IEP Development & Implementation for Students with ASD (2 days)

This module focuses on the process of developing an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for students with ASD that incorporates the legal requirements of LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) and embeds established evidence-based practices for students with ASD. Participants complete an Educational Benefit Review that addresses the effectiveness of previous IEPs in order to enhance the future IEP process. Participants learn how to write an effective Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statement as well as develop observable and measureable goals and objectives related to the student's progress in the general education curriculum & setting. Strategies for implementing the IEP with fidelity and data collection procedures for monitoring progress toward goals & objectives are also covered including a process for successful yearly transition.

K-12 Training Curriculum

Two - Year Training Commitment

(continued)

Administrator Module (1 day)

The administrative module provides a fast-paced overview of the components and guiding principles of START intensive training and addresses the changing role of administrators in program development, implementation and evaluation for students with ASD. Strategies for improving implementation of evidence-based practices is also addressed including understanding how the ASD can be used to improve educational outcomes. The afternoon session details current topics and critical components and tools (e.g. coaching) for administrating and improving programming for students with ASD.

Year Two Supplementary Modules

Attribution, Advocacy, and Accountability: Supporting all Students with ASD (The module formerly known as Asperger) (2 days)

This module is intended for participants educating students with Asperger's Syndrome (AS). The module explores characteristics of students with AS and effective practices identified in the literature to support students in their school environment. Relevant theories are covered, including social attribution theory and theory of mind, which are critical to supporting the social, emotional and behavioral development of students with AS. The Path A/Path B strategy is used to teach participants how attributions impact decision-making and responses to the behaviors of students with AS.

Self-Management (1 day)

Self-management strategies have been used for students with a wide range of academic and behavioral challenges, including students with ASD. Teaching self-management is a pivotal behavior for students to learn how to independently regulate their behavior across many situations. Although teachers and family members may initially play a major role in the implementation of the system, ultimately, the responsibility for ongoing use of the system should be passed to the student as much as possible. In this presentation, participants will learn how to individualize a self-management system for a student with ASD. This will include the steps needed for a student to learn to discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, monitor and record their own behaviors, and reward themselves for meeting a specified goal.

Education-Based Evaluations for ASD (1 day)

This module outlines critical components and processes for an education-based special education eligibility evaluation for ASD. It incorporates key features of its foundational predecessor, CET (Centralized Evaluation Team), and includes a detailed review of the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) ASD eligibility criteria. Evaluation components and processes outlined in the Education-Based Evaluations for ASD document published by the Michigan Autism Council are also reviewed which include tools and examples for interviews, observations, and report-writing. A critical review of available standardized tests and their technical adequacy and differential eligibility decision-making processes are also included.

Building Your Future Training Curriculum

One - Year Training Commitment

Module 1: Orientation, Foundations in ASD & Effective Teaming, and Discovery (1 day)

This module provides participants with an orientation to the START Project and an overview of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) including current characteristics and definitions; learning and behavior support needs; and research in the area of ASD. The module also includes information on evidence-based practices for students with ASD, including the importance of family involvement in educational planning. A discovery process (V3 Discovery), adapted from the work of Griffin & Hammis and Gold and Associates, is also presented as an age appropriate transition assessment to support employment planning that is aligned with the principles of self-determination and person-centered planning. Participants learn the 5-step process and are given opportunities to apply the steps in their own work at each module.

Module 2: V3 Discovery & Guiding Principles to Support Inclusive Employment (1 day)

This module covers the core guiding principles necessary for improving post-secondary transition outcomes for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other complex disabilities. Guiding Principles are discussed in the context of evidence-based practices and include Dignity of Risk, Presume Competence, high expectations, integrated employment, and other effective practices. The Teaming Process is an effective meeting format used to develop solutions to challenges associated with improving employment outcomes. It includes the steps of Meeting Mechanics, a problem solving process, and the use of Visual Organizers for capturing and organizing information. Participants will learn how this process can be readily applied to student planning meetings.

Module 3: Evidence-Based Supports for Employment Success (1 day)

This module explores effective (and ineffective) strategies for addressing behavioral challenges of youth with ASD that interfere with success in work and social environments. Participants will gain an understanding of the behavioral science and a multi-tiered model of positive behavioral support as well as a process for developing effective employment supports and strategies. Strategies covered include self-management, visual schedules and supports, and effective teaching strategies for preventing challenges and barriers to sustained employment.

Module 4: Peer to Peer and other Natural Supports (1 day)

This module will teach participants the steps needed to develop a peer to peer or natural supports for youth with ASD in an employment setting. The module will include the concept of medium of exchange, a way to connect a co-worker to a person with ASD, and case conferences, a meeting process used to promote problem solving. The module will also introduce participants to "The 7 Phase Sequence for Balancing Naturalness and Individual Needs" by Michael Callahan.

Module 5: Attribution, Advocacy, and Accountability: Supporting all Students with ASD (The module formerly known as Asperger) (1 day)

This presentation offers a new way of thinking about students with Asperger Syndrome (AS). The information presented will go beyond specific characteristics of students with AS and instead consider how those characteristics impact the way adults interact with people with AS. The significant emotional, and often negative, reactions of adults may be due to a mis-attribution of the behaviors of AS. These reactions may impede relationships and social and academic performance, resulting in less positive outcomes for people with AS. This presentation will provide a review of attribution theory through the lens of AS, allowing adults working with people with AS to better understand their role in the response to and education of these co-workers.

Building Your Future Training Curriculum

One - Year Training Commitment

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Module 6: Discovery and the IEP (1 day)

This module will assist participants in understanding the discovery process and how to assure the information gathered through the process is embedded in the transition plan in the IEP. Additionally, this module focuses on the process of developing an IEP that incorporates the legal requirements of LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) and addresses the unique needs of young adults with ASD to ensure access and success in employment, independent living, higher education and community involvement. Participants learn how to write an effective Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statement as well as develop observable and measureable goals and objectives related to the student's success in post-secondary transition. Strategies for implementing the IEP with fidelity and data collection procedures for monitoring progress toward goals and objectives are also covered.

Module 8: Discovery: Path to Employment (1 day)

This module explores the structures and processes needed to increase the capacity of local communities to embrace individuals with ASD and ensure their successful transition to adulthood. Participants are provided a structure for developing a coaching model as well as skills for serving in a variety of coaching roles and responsibilities. Included in these processes is the planning for ongoing training opportunities for 3 primary community partner groups: providers (including MRS, CMH, school personnel, etc.), employers and college/technical school personnel, and community professionals (doctors, dentists, barbers/stylists, etc.).

Administrator Module (1 day)

The administrative module provides a fast-paced overview of the components and guiding principles of the START Building Your Future (BYF) Secondary Transition Intensive Training. It also addresses the changing role of administrators in program development, implementation and evaluation for transition youth with ASD. Strategies for improving implementation of evidence-based employment practices is also addressed including understanding how the ASD can be used to improve employment outcomes. The afternoon session details critical components and tools for administering and improving programming for transition youth with ASD.