Professional Development/Evidence-based Practice Group

Discussants: Brian Johnson, Mike Schulz, Annette Valejo, Carol Wesley, Dana Bauer, Sue Murvich, Lisa Caya, Ann Raminger, Jen Bailey, Glennis Benson, Liz Oftedahl (facilitator), Anne Harris (notetaker)

Definition/description of the group (these concepts were discussed, the wording not finalized):
This group will identify and address priority areas that need attention relating to professional development for those who serve individuals with ASD (and other DD). These areas will include evidence-based practices as they relate to early identification, screening, referral, assessment, and diagnosis of developmental disabilities, including ASD, as well as evidence-based therapeutic approaches that address the different and changing needs of children and young adults, and their families, as they grow and develop throughout childhood to adulthood, across service systems.

Priority Areas
1) early ID of children – recognizing signs, referring for assessment and diagnosis
2) training across professions, ensuring that multidisciplinary, collaborative approaches are used, and that the same information is shared for parents and educators
3) recognize and address the needs (services and supports) of people with ASD across the lifespan as people age and change

First one to work one: #1 above, narrowed down to the following action step
What do professionals need to know between basic child development and instruction/ training on evidence-based therapies? - come up with a checklist of what (content/methods) to include in a basic training on “understanding autism”

Concepts:
- this content could be used/should be appropriate for different professional groups, administrators, families, communities
- this content needs to address the following related to ASD: etiology, brain-based theory, communication deficits, social deficits, safety issues, sensory issues, cognitive issues, cultural issues
- what skills do professionals need to have to work in this field?
- How do professionals get support from administrators to get this kind of training and get “buy-in” to developing a basic understanding of autism by all levels of professionals

Persons responsible –
Everyone in group is asked to look for resources in their own area (or through their national groups) to address the above concepts for professional development, results will be shared at the teleconference call
Liz Oftedahl will send an e-mail with scheduler link (meeting wizard?) to schedule the call in late July, group members will respond to her e-mail and send her any resources that they know about, especially “links” for materials to look at prior to the call.

Liz will also conduct a basic literature search for evidence-based materials to address this educational need.

Workgroup will need to coordinate this collecting of resources process with Tim Markle and the Connections Resource Mapping in WI.

Goal of conference call: look at similarities, differences, gaps in the evidence-base for “understanding autism” curricula.