

CoPA
5/23/16 Meeting Minutes

Participants: Karen Durst, Muff Perry, Carol Burke, Jaylene Trueblood, Kerry Lambert, Dana Childress, Toni Peace, Beth Pruitt, Barbara Brown, Nancy Bailey, Debi Stepien, Kate Beitel, Deana Buck

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome to new participants, Jaylene and Kate.

2. Partner Updates:

- **Virginia Autism Council (VAC)** **Beth Pruitt**
 - ◆ (Thanks to Beth for sharing the following info)- VAC -
 - -Waiver redesign - started sharing information about the redesign process . Will be more waivers available, but still huge wait, families should still get on the list. New screening process.
 - -CDR/VA Beach - seeing increase in children with ASD
 - -Private ABA provider -- had TriCare Audit.. noted money NOT paid IF goals were educational in nature
 - -Autism Grant - third site in Danville/Pittsylvania County... slow going but moving along.
- **Act Early** **Deana Buck**
- **Autism Center for Excellence (ACE)** **Selena Layden**
 - ◆ (Thanks to Selena for providing updates via email which were shared with members and copied here)- VCU-ACE completed 5 live trainings in conjunction with the Partnership on early screening for EI providers and daycare/childcare providers. These occurred in Danville, Roanoke, and Christiansburg. The information was very well received! Of course we did the Talks on Tuesday with you all, which I think went very well. Hopefully others thought so too. We are also revamping our online course on behavior and that will be launching again in October. The other big news for us is that we launched our new parent course: The Parent Playbook, in April and are receiving great feedback on that. This course is designed to introduce families to information about ASD, including tips for caregivers, info about the DSM-5, characteristics, interventions, and recommended programs and services. The course is designed for any parent, but specifically focuses on those parents who have a child who has received a diagnosis of ASD within the past year.

3. Communities of Practice (CoP)/Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

- Cori shared that she attended a session at the Inclusion Institute related to CoPs or PLCs. The presenters shared a handout to evaluate effectiveness of CoPs. Cori sent with meeting agenda (also attached). Throughout the concurrent session, Cori reported that she was thinking of CoPA and questions such as:
 - ◆ Are we effective?
 - ◆ Do we need to consider the mission, outcomes, challenges, format?

CoPA members reviewed the mission, key outcomes, and challenges listed below:

Mission:

The Communities of Practice in Autism (CoPAs) will share knowledge and information about evidence-based strategies in natural environments, focusing on infants, toddlers, and young

children diagnosed or suspected of having Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and their families, to enhance supports and services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Key Outcomes:

- Improve knowledge of providers and others related to evidence-based intervention for young children with Autism.
- Identify and disseminate strategies that can be used in natural settings, such as the home, the library, or the community playground. These strategies should be embedded into the daily routines and activities of the family.
- Foster communication and collaboration among providers, with families, and other community members to improve implementation of the IFSP/FSP.
- Improve supports and services for all children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families.

Providing Support to Overcome Challenges:

- Lack of knowledge about what is evidence-based for infants, toddlers and young children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- Providers do not always know how to explain the rationale for specific interventions, supports, and/or services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders to families or others in the community.
- Providers do not always know how to teach family members or solve problems with families for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Discussion ensued including:

- **Do we need to redefine purpose? Are we really a learning community?**
- **A community of practice supports itself. It is led by the group.**
- **What's our purpose?**
- **Have we grown past this mission?**
- **Hoping it continues. We are seeing more children with autism and we're not meeting their needs, more can be done. Don't see we're meeting that as a system. ESL with autism—trouble getting into school system—not meeting this populations need.**
- **So many people with different backgrounds are so valuable. Hate to see us lose that.**
- **Children most challenged by their autism...we don't make the difference that we should. Some local systems have providers outside of Part C but not every system has access to private providers. Intensive service can really make difference with some children in communities that have private providers...not statewide access to private providers.**
- **Would be loss if we stop this kind of group. We are taking time out to better EI services for children with ASD. Does it need to be called something different? Challenges ARE different now.**
- **One benefit is we get current updates from autism related services across VA.**
- **Does it still need to be called a CoP?**
- **Do we need a committee to tackle these bullets?**
- **The group wants 'something' to continue, likes updates. Kerry shared historically we shared articles and practices. Have not done a lot of looking at articles, reading prior to meeting. Carol-they had topics, different speaker each meeting. Would love to have more nuts and bolts concrete things we can do in home with VA's coaching when training and coaching families when working with them.**

- **We can get updates through different avenues-Part C office, PD Team**

Members opted to create a subcommittee to create a survey to poll any CoPA member who has attended at least one call during the last year. Committee members include: Beth, Carol, Deana, Karen, Kate and Jaylene. Cori will convene the group.

4. Continuation plans-Survey will be launched and will guide whether we continue or revamp CoPA. No meeting scheduled at this time.