

To: Directors of Education Support Services

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Subject: Autism Training Initiatives 2020 - 2021

Copies: Julie Michaud; Craig Caldwell; Kim Korotkov; Superintendents; Directors of Schools; ESS
Subject Coordinators; Learning Specialists – Provincial Autism Training

As part of the EECD Autism Training Framework, professional learning activities are planned to support education personnel throughout the school year in the three levels of training offered by the Autism Learning Partnership. While some of the details have yet to be finalized, the following information is meant to assist with planning and provide information about initiatives that will occur during the upcoming year.

Level 1: ASD and Behavioural Interventions

Description: *ASD and Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel* is designed for all education personnel including teachers, school administration, educational assistants, speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, etc. The training includes 40 hours of self-paced instruction with suggested benchmarks for completion and a quiz at the end of each module to ensure mastery of critical concepts. Individuals who successfully complete the training program will receive a Certificate of Completion. Information regarding participants' completion will be provided to districts at the end of the course.

Initiatives

1. **Level 1 for Educational Assistants and School Intervention Workers:** All Educational Assistants who have not yet completed the course, new EAs and SIWs, including casuals will complete the online course. **Please note that a nbed account and employee number are required when registering.**

Newly hired Educational Assistants and School Intervention Workers can register for Level 1 by completing this form: <https://asdatlantic.wufoo.eu/forms/r1o2e2ed0ji1qoj/>
New registrations will be processed every Wednesday.

2. **Level 1 available to all school and district personnel:** All school and district personnel may participate in this online training. Registration is expected to take place in early February, and the course will begin in early Spring. Information about registration will be sent in February for distribution to schools.

Level 2: Learning for Teaching: Behavioural Tools for Teaching Learners with ASD

Description: This comprehensive training program, including e-learning, workshops, and job-embedded face-to-face coaching will help Education Support Teachers- Resource, and Education Support Teachers-Autism further develop their knowledge and skills to support school teams in the development and implementation of effective educational programs for learners with ASD in an inclusive learning environment. Individuals who successfully complete the training program will receive a Certificate of Completion. Information regarding participants' completion will be provided to districts at the end of the course.

Initiatives

1. **2020-2021 cohort:** The participants in this cohort started in September 2019 and completed the first component, *Teaching Cognitive, Social and Communication Skills* in February 2020. The second component, *Teaching Positive Behaviour*, was discontinued when schools closed in March. Those interested and able can complete the training during this school year (October 2020 – June 2021) with the following adaptations in place:
 - Each participant has a flexible training schedule with deadlines customized to meet their and their school's needs;
 - The workshop has been pre-recorded and made available online, so participants may view at their convenience and according to their training schedule;
 - Virtual coaching to the extent possible; and
 - Trainers familiarizing themselves with school operational plans to ensure safety for all during onsite coaching visits.

Level 3: Continuing Education

Description: To maintain skills and knowledge of best practices, continuing education will be offered to those professionals having completed Level 2, and Education Support Teachers-Autism. Examples of professional learning opportunities include workshops, consultation with Learning Specialists supporting Provincial Autism Training in each region and support in obtaining advanced certification in Applied Behaviour Analysis.

Initiatives

1. **New Resources:** The Autism Learning Partnership has developed several resources to support the needs of learners with ASD in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and transitioning back to school. Many of these resources are available on the Learning at Home: Resources for Families website (https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education/learning_at_home.html).
2. **Professional Learning and Support for Education Support Teachers- Autism:** A site was created in March on One SharePoint for EST-As from around the province to share resources and collaborate to support learner's with ASD during the pandemic. The site is monitored by the Autism Learning Partnership and new resources are added as they become available.
3. **Advanced Certification in Applied Behaviour Analysis:** Those involved in acquiring advanced certification in Applied Behaviour Analysis (BCBA), will continue their coursework and supervision of applied fieldwork online, with many candidates expecting to complete the training requirements and sit for the exam in 2021. The Autism Learning Partnership is considering options for providing learning opportunities online.
4. **APSEA Autism in Education Partnership:** AIE will offer a series of webinars related to autism and inclusive education during the next school year. These webinars are open to the public. Dates and topics to be announced.
5. **Parents/Guardians** of school-aged learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder living in New Brunswick have access to Level 1, ASD and Behavioural Interventions. This training provides parents with introductory training to build understanding of the characteristics of ASD, and the base of evidence and theories that support behavioural interventions and their implementation. Further information will be sent when the registration period is open.

Please feel free to share the above information with Education Support Teachers- Autism.

Thank you in advance for your support of these EECD Autism Training Framework initiatives. Please do not hesitate to contact Catherine Breault or Stéphanie Melanson if you have suggestions, questions or concerns.

Regards,

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