

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505**

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N.D. State Autism Conference offers training Oct. 20-22 for medical professionals, parents, service providers, first responders, and others

BISMARCK, N.D. – People whose lives are touched by autism spectrum disorder face a lifelong journey. Getting a good start, through early diagnosis and proven intervention services and resources, can make the journey smoother.

As depicted in the conference logo, North Dakota is starting to provide new services and is organizing education and training for parents and professionals such as the upcoming First Annual North Dakota State Autism Spectrum Disorders Conference, Oct. 20-22, in Bismarck.

The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Autism Services Unit, the North Dakota Department of Health, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, and other partners have planned a conference that provides information and important training to a wide variety of attendees.

About 40 national and regional experts will share information about new research, effective interventions, supports, and resources that can help parents, health care professionals, educators, first responders, autism service providers, and others help people with autism spectrum disorder reach their full potential.

"We are excited to offer general training, as well as specialized training tracks for parents, providers, educators, physicians and other medical professionals, and first responders," said Department of Human Services Autism Services Unit Coordinator Trisha Page.

Page said parents of newly diagnosed children, policymakers, professionals, and others seeking core background information will benefit from two Oct. 20 sessions led by Lori Garnes, Ph.D., associate director of development for the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) and Special Education Department faculty member at Minot State University. Garnes will discuss autism spectrum disorder conditions, legal aspects, history, parent perspectives, educational programming, service delivery systems, and research.

Nationally recognized expert and director of the Autism Institute in the College of Medicine at Florida State University, Professor Amy Wetherby, Ph.D., will open the conference on Oct. 20, with a session on effective early social interaction and coaching families on strategies and supports they can use with toddlers with autism spectrum disorder. She will also discuss new web-based training resources and tools to improve community-based early detection of autism.

Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D., a nationally recognized applied researcher, author, and associate professor at the University of Kansas, will share information on Oct. 21 about behavioral interventions to address the cycle of tantrums, rage, and meltdowns caused by innate stress and anxiety.

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She will also lead a session on the Comprehensive Autism Planning System that can be used by a child's educational team to assure consistent use of supports while measuring student success and identifying team training needs.

First responders and emergency medical professionals can learn about approaching, assessing, and treating autism spectrum disorder patients in pre-hospital and urgent care settings.

Other conference sessions include a panel on screening and diagnostic clinics in North Dakota responding to situations involving missing children with special needs, nutrition and autism, the college experience through the eyes of a student with autism spectrum disorder, parenting a child with autism, the transition to life after high school for people with autism, and other topics.

Speaker and training topic details are online at <http://www.dce.ndsu.nodak.edu/conferences/ndautism/schedule/>. All conference training will be held at the Ramada Hotel, 1400 E. Interchange Ave., Bismarck, N.D.

Registration and Continuing Education Details

Registration fees vary by days attended, and parents may qualify for reduced registration and lodging rates. Continuing education units are available for counselors, social workers, and through the North Dakota Peace Officer Standards and Training. Other professionals should check with their own governing boards in advance to determine if the general CEUs available meet their requirements.

Upon completion of the program participants will be able to: define North Dakota's approach to an ASD database with lessons learned from New Jersey, understand nutritional implications for children with autism, understand DSM V, describe evidence-based treatments, understand the importance of medical home for children with autism, and identify autism diagnostic clinics throughout North Dakota.

This activity has also been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of the University of North Dakota (UND) School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the North Dakota Department of Health. The UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

AMA/PRA DESIGNATION STATEMENT FOR CATEGORY 1: The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences designates this live activity for a maximum of 18.75 Category 1 Credit(s)[™]. Physicians should claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Autism spectrum disorders are neurological disorders affecting the brain that can affect a person's ability to learn, and interact and communicate with others. The number of people in North Dakota with autism spectrum disorders is unknown at this time, but the number of people diagnosed in the United States is growing.

For more information about autism-related services and programs funded by Human Services, go online to www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/index.html, or contact Trisha Page at 701-328-8949, toll-free 800-755-2719, ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888, fax 701-328-8969, or email tpage@nd.gov.