

Southwest Virginia CoPA Highlands and Mount Rogers

Action Plan 2009

Definition of a Community of Practice- “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002)

CoPA Leader(s)

Ms. Shirley R. Blake, M.S., Southwest Care Connection for Children

CoPA Core Group

Rhonda Lusk, Infant and Toddler Connection of Highlands;

Kim Taylor, Infant and Toddler Connection of Mount Rogers;

2009 Goals

Goal 1: Increase public awareness

- The core group will
 - build membership by developing a list of individuals in the region, including family members, who are concerned about young children diagnosed or suspected of having ASD
 - establish a regular meeting date and location(s)
 - develop a strategy for advertising meetings (listserv, email, etc.)
- CoPA members will
 - identify public events to disseminate CoPA information (community health fairs, PTA events, Oyster Festival, etc.)
 - members will volunteer to assist at events

Objective 1 - The core group will establish networks, email lists and ask each person to “buddy” with another person who needs information and help with Autism in order increase numbers of their particular supporting group. This will aide in the construction of our periphery membership. Have a meeting where we have to bring a newly identified parent.

Goal 2: Assess ASD needs specific to this region

- members identify needs at next CoPA meeting
- prioritize needs

Objective 1 – The group will assess resources available in the areas of: Mt. Rogers, and Highlands

Objective 2 – CoPA meetings will be held to showcase Southwestern Virginia counties that do have in place formal programs.

- A. Smyth County
- B. Carroll County

Objective 3 – In order to increase buy-in of the school systems, at one of their monthly meetings Directors of Special Education will learn about our CoPA through a presentation utilizing the core group.

Objective 4 - Infant and Toddler programs will be encouraged to provide staff trainings for their Special Instructors and Service Coordinators utilizing members of the CoPA team, since remember (Profit have no honor in his own country!)

Objective 5 - Working with the already trained T-TAC individuals of the Smyth County program and Carroll County Care program, the CoPA will ask that they assist others school divisions get a “jump-start.”

Objective 6 – The group will set up a Southwest Virginia list of contacts by county to distribute and use for immediate resource and explore ways to make the web-based directory easier to access.

Goal 3: Membership develops strategies to address identified needs

Objective 1 – Region 7 CoPA leaders will man an information table at the upcoming New Horizons Conference for Professionals and Parents on May 19, 2009 and at community health fairs.

Goal 4: Membership identifies major outcome for this year (develop a regional resource guide, develop website, etc.)

Objective 1 – Community services such as Frontier Health and Family Preservation may use a CoPA member when working with mental health professionals for in-services and trainings, individuals with intellectual disabilities, individuals with autism and their families.

Reminders

- *while you might want to devote an occasional meeting to a presentation, use your meeting time to “do the work” that your membership has identified as a need*
- *give your members the opportunity to be a functioning member of the CoPA, not merely a receiver of information (note in the definition that CoP members **interact** on an ongoing basis)*