AUTISM PROGRAM QUALITY INDICATORS

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FOREWORD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INDî

This publication provides Autism Program Quality Indicators (APQI), intended as a self-review and quality improvement guide for schools and programs serving students with autism spectrum disorders. The APQI were developed by the New York Autism Network at the request of the New York State Education Department. The APQI promote the goal that all students in New York State receive special education that meets high educational standards by providing benchmarks of quality programs that result in successful outcomes for students with autism. The APQI are a compilation of research-based components that have been linked to high quality and effective educational programs for students with autism. The items on the APQI were derived from a variety of sources including a review of the scientific literature, professional experience and input and review by national experts in the field of autism. The APQI were also reviewed by representatives from the regional advisory groups to the New York Autism Network, including parents of students with autism, advocacy groups and school personnel.

I encourage schools to use the APQI to conduct periodic self-reviews of the programs and services provided to children with autism and to address quality improvement as needed. I also encourage parents of children with autism to use the APQI as benchmarks of quality programs for their children. The APQI will help parents to identify those features of educational supports and services that combine to result in effective programs, regardless of specific educational methodologies used.

If you have specific questions regarding the APQI, please direct your inquiries to the Special Education Policy Unit at 518-473-2878. If you would like to receive notification of our publications via e-mail, register at web.nysed.gov/vesid/register.htm. This publication is also available on the web at web.nysed.gov/vesid/sped/Autism/Autism.htm.

Sincerely,

Lawrence C. Gloeckler

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2	There is some evidence of this indicator there is clear evidence of the indicator for only a portion of students with autism.
3	This quality indicator is clearly evident for all students with autism.

These ratings can be applied to each of the items and a summary rating can be given to each area. A summary table at the end of the scale allows programs to identify areas of relative strength and weakness.

AUTISM PROGRAM QUALITY INDICATORS

Score	Description
NA	Not applicable. The program is not responsible for this areo Ď'porograŕNA "-NA'Þ5scn"ogra io ʻÀNa.ëMs,Ĵ'porograŕN

Summary Rating for Instructional Methods	.	.

INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS: Educational environments provide a structure that builds on a student's strengths while minimizing those factors that most interfere with learning.		**Score**	**Comments**
1)	Environments are initially simplified to help students recognize relevant information.	..	.
2)	When needed (particularly for younger students), classrooms have defined areas that provide clear visual boundaries for specific activities.	.	.
3)	Environmental supports (e.g., the use of visual schedules) are available that facilitate the student's ability to: a) predict events and activities, b) anticipate change, c) understand expectations.	.	.
4)	Communication toward and with students: a) is geared to their language abilities, b) is clear and relevant, c) encourages dialogue (when appropriate), rather than being largely directive.	.	.
Summary Rating for Instructional Environments		.	.

REVIEW AND MONITORING OF PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES: The program uses a collaborative, ongoing, systematic process for assessing student progress.		**Score**	**Comments**
1)	The program provides regular and ongoing assessment of each student's progress on his/her specific IEP goals and objectives.	.	.
2)	Student progress is summarized and reviewed by an educational team.	. ..	.
3)	Students are assessed and the instructional program is refined when: a) target objectives have been achieved, b) progress is not observed after an appropriate trial perinmatp b) fi& obsoprun:		

3)	The program demonstrates an awareness and respect for the culture, language, values, and parenting styles of the families they serve.	.	.
4)	The program makes available "parent counseling and training" services, which: a) provide parents with information about child development, b) assist parents to understand the needs of their child, c) foster coordination of efforts between school and home, d) support the family in behavior management, e) enable parents to acquire skills to support the implementation of their child's IEP.	.	.
5)	Parents are provided with opportunities to meet regularly with other parents and professionals in support groups.	.	.
6)	Parents receive regular communication from the program regarding their child's progress.	.	.
7)	Parents are assisted in accessing services from other agencies (when available and as appropriate) such as respite, in-home behavior support, home health care, transportation, etc.	..	.
Summary Rating for Family Involvement and Support		.	.

INCLUSION: Opportunities for interaction with nondisabled peers are incorporated into the program.		**Score**	**Comments**
1)	The program offers opportunities for interaction with nondisabled peers in both informal and planned interactions.	..	.
2)	In their contact with nondisabled peers, students are provided with instruction and support to maximize successful interactions.	.	iŎ
3)	The program provides nondisabled peers with knowledge and support (e.g., peer training) to facilitate and encourage spontaneous and meaning¯		

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Individual Evaluation	
Development of the Individualized Education Program	
Curriculum	
Instructional Activities	
Instructional Methods	
Instructional Environments	
Review and Monitoring of Progress and Outcomes	
Family Involvement and Support	
Inclusion	
Community Collaboration	
Planning the Move from One Setting to Another	
Challenging Behavior	
Personnel	
Program Evaluation	

(1) For a list of quality indicators on other topics such as Individual Evaluations, Pre-referral Processes, and Individualized Education Programs (IEP), contact VESID at 518-473-2878.