

Developments, April 2021

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Intro

Developments is a newsletter for Autism CARES legislation grantees, published by AUCD's Interdisciplinary Technical Assistance Center on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (ITAC) in partnership with AMCHP's State Public Health Autism Resource Center (SPHARC). Its purpose is to share news, activities, events, research, and accomplishments across grantee areas - research, training, and state implementation.

MCHB Minute

[Hello Autism CARES Grantees!](#)

In the DC area, signs of spring are all around us - a welcome appearance after what felt like an especially long winter. They bring renewed hope and energy for what is ahead. I am also feeling energized about the opportunities in front of us, particularly around achieving equity for children, adolescents and families with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other Developmental Disabilities (DD). With a focus on achieving health equity at all levels of the Biden-Harris Administration, we are poised as the Autism CARES network to take stock of our equity goals and of the current and potential impact of our work. This may include reflection on our collective accomplishments over time and charting a course for equity for the next 10 years. [Read more...](#)

CARES Network Announcements

[2021 Autism CARES Meeting Update: Call for Proposals](#)

This virtual event is an opportunity for HRSA-funded CARES grantees (representing research, training, and state systems) to share information about activities within their respective networks, discuss emerging trends, and facilitate meaningful collaboration. This event includes both asynchronous and synchronous elements. [Read more...](#)

Research Roundup

[AIR-P \(UCLA\) Progress to Date](#)

The Autism Intervention Research Network on Physical Health (AIR-P) is a multi-disciplinary, multi-site network that supports innovative life course intervention research and promotes optimal health and well-being of autistic individuals across the lifespan. In September 2020, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) was awarded funding by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau in the Health Resources and Services Administration to lead and develop the network with the primary goal of increasing the life expectancy and quality of life for autistic individuals. [Read more...](#)

[**AIR-B Network Continues Outreach in Diverse Communities**](#)

Although much of the research activity has moved virtual, the Autism Intervention Research Network on Behavioral Health (AIR-B Network; PI: Kasari) continues its research-community partnership in the COVID-19 era. The AIR-B is a network of researchers at UCLA, UC Davis, University of Pennsylvania, University of Rochester, Drexel University, University of Kansas, University of Washington and each site's local community partners working to increase equity in access to ASD information and interventions for families of children with ASD. [Read more...](#)

[**Females with Autism Reach Puberty Earlier, says Vanderbilt Kennedy Center \(TN IDDRC, UCEDD, LEND\) Researcher**](#)

Blythe Corbett, Ph.D., professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences and investigator with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (TN IDDRC, UCEDD, LEND), recently led a study which found that on average, females with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) experienced the onset of puberty 9.5 months earlier than their peers. [Read more...](#)

[**Effect of Family Navigation on Diagnostic Ascertainment Among Children at Risk for Autism: A Randomized Clinical Trial From DBPNet**](#)

Researchers from the Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics Research Network (DBPNet) recently published an article in the Journal of American Medical Association, Pediatrics (JAMA). The citation and abstract can be found below. [Read more...](#)

Training Topics

[**Interprofessional Group of NJLEND Faculty and Nutrition Fellow Write Article for Exceptional Parent Magazine**](#)

An article on oral health and nutrition concerns for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) written by an interprofessional group of NJLEND Faculty and Nutrition Fellow was published in the February 2021 issue of Exceptional Parent Magazine. Jane Ziegler, DCN, RDN, LDN, NJLEND Nutrition Faculty, Evan Spivak, DDS, NJLEND Dental Faculty, and Karen Stanfar, MPH, RDN, LD, NJLEND Nutrition Fellow, authored "Oral Health and Nutrition Concerns in Autism Spectrum Disorders" to provide information about autism-related behaviors, dietary habits, medical comorbidities, and medication use which may contribute to oral health and nutrition concerns. [Read More...](#)

[**UCLA All Brains**](#)

UCLA All Brains was established in 2017 after students recognized the unmet need of UCLA as a neurodiverse-friendly campus. At the first town hall meeting, many neurodivergent students expressed the lack of resources and communities. As a result of this need, All Brains was formed. All Brains works as a community intervention model with three branches including socials, peer mentoring, and training/workshops. Although we are UCLA based, all of our services are open to all students. [Read more...](#)

[**Nisonger LEND Leadership Project: Pilot ECHO with AMSEN School in Tanzania**](#)

This year, a team of LEND trainees and faculty developed an Extensions for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) pilot project with an AUCD Professional Fellow and other teachers from the Al Muntazir Special Needs School (AMSEN) in Tanzania. According to the 2012 Tanzania Disability Monograph, only one major university in Tanzania produces teachers for students with ASD/DD. [Read more...](#)

[Increasing Access to Diagnostic Evaluations and Ongoing Care for Autism Across Washington State](#)

University of Washington LEND is excited to report initial outcomes of ECHO Autism Washington: our new ECHO program supporting primary care providers (PCPs) in Washington State in diagnosing and managing autism spectrum disorder (ASD). [Read more...](#)

State Stories

[Updates from the State Public Health Autism Resource Center](#)

2021 has arrived! Despite the challenges we have all faced during COVID-19, our Community of Learners have persevered and made excellent progress in their work. To learn more about each grantee's work, check out their state profiles on the SPHARC [webpage](#). Recap: Autism Acceptance Month 2021. [Read more...](#)

Collaborators' Corner

[Autism Friendly Initiative](#)

Patients on the autism spectrum have various sensory and communication needs which can make the fast-paced and often over-stimulating hospital environment particularly challenging. In response, Boston Medical Center (BMC) launched the Autism Friendly Initiative in order to improve the healthcare experience for patients with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families. [Read more...](#)

[Reflection on CCSN Experience Three Years Later](#)

During my time as an undergraduate at Tufts University, I interned at the Center for Children with Special Needs. Prior to this experience, I did not have much experience with children with special needs. Through this internship, I had the opportunity to not only learn about different developmental-behavioral disorders, but also to interact with and learn from children with these disorders. [Read more...](#)

[A Fellow's Perspective: Virtual Opportunities through Rochester LEND's Collaborations in Central America](#)

It has been more than a year since we started adapting to the "new conditions" of living in a world with the COVID-19 pandemic. Transitioning from face-to-face to all-virtual interactions was not as much fun as the option of "working and studying from the bedroom" sounded. Not only did we start missing familiar faces, but we had to limit new relationships to connections traveling through router devices and Zoom platforms. [Read more...](#)

[Southern LEND Regional Collaborative](#)

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental & Related Disabilities (LEND) trainees and faculty from the states of Arkansas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas participated in the Southern Regional Collaborative Seminars on November 20th and March 5th virtually via Zoom. The Southern Regional Collaborative Seminar is an opportunity for each state's program to come together to learn more about each other's programs and to give trainees an opportunity to network. [Read more...](#)

[LEND an Ear: On-Demand Disability Training](#)

Fellows from the Institute on Community Integration are contributing to a podcast series that delivers on-the-go training and insight to child welfare workers. The current and former fellows are from ICI's Minnesota Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (MNLEND) program, an interdisciplinary leadership training program that brings together more than 16 disciplines across the University of Minnesota. [Read more...](#)

ITAC Items

[ITAC is Hiring for Bilingual Program Manager](#)

Interested in working for a national disability organization in the Washington, DC area? Passionate about growing diverse and skilled leaders? If you or someone you know can answer "yes" to any or all of these questions, consider working for AUCD! [Read more...](#)

[Autism Acceptance Month Activities](#)

AUCD, our members, and partners have used this as an opportunity to share information relating to Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The month has traditionally been framed as Autism Awareness Month, and April 2nd as World or International Autism Awareness Day. AUCD has shifted from "Awareness" to "Acceptance" in our April messaging. [Read more...](#)

News from HHS

[HHS Launches 'We Can Do This: Live' Initiative to Increase COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence](#)

As part of the Biden-Harris Administration's "We Can Do This" public education campaign to increase confidence in the COVID-19 vaccines and encourage vaccination, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is launching a new initiative today to connect Americans with facts and information on

vaccines from doctors, scientists, and health professionals through high-impact digital platforms. [Read more...](#)

Events

[Prepared4ALL: Including Disability in Local Emergency Planning](#)

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Virtual

[2021 AUCD Emerging Leaders End of the Year Webinar](#)

Friday, May 7, 2021

Virtual

[AUCD 2021 is Going Virtual. Submit Your Proposal Today!](#)

November 15-17, 2021

Virtual

Upcoming Activities

Join the [AUCD Autism Special Interest Group](#).

About

Developments is a newsletter for Autism CARES programs funded under MCHB. The content of this newsletter has been generated by program staff and trainees and does not necessarily reflect the views and policies of HRSA-MCHB. No official support or endorsement by HRSA-MCHB is intended or should be inferred. This publication is funded in part by cooperative agreement #UA5MC11068.