



# REFLECTIONS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 2023 ISSUE

## NEW STUDY: TRAINING COMMUNITY CLINICIANS TO PROVIDE QUALITY CARE FOR AUTISTIC ADULTS

Dr. Kristin Sohl alongside other researchers recently published an article titled *ECHO autism adult healthcare: Training community clinicians to provide quality care for autistic adults*.

Autistic adults can experience significant unmet healthcare needs, with opportunities for improvement in both the systems and the practitioners who serve this population. Primary care physicians (PCPs) are the obvious choice to provide comprehensive care to autistic adults but often lack experience in serving this population. This pilot study developed and tested an ECHO Autism model focused specifically on training PCPs in best-practice care for autistic adults.

After participation in the ECHO Autism program, PCP self-efficacy and satisfaction improved and showed significant knowledge gains. While attention to systems of care is critical to addressing barriers in healthcare in the autistic population, the ECHO Autism Adult Healthcare model is feasible and holds promise for improving PCP satisfaction and self-efficacy in working with autistic adults.

Check out the article [HERE](#).



## NEW ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY

ECHO Autism Communities is dedicated to bringing best-practice resources to everyone as well as training healthcare professionals in providing evidence-based practices.

Hundreds of healthcare professionals have completed ECHO Autism programs and received training in providing quality care to autistic individuals.

ECHO Autism Communities is launching our EAC Directory, where you will find a list of professionals who have attended our programs and trainings. We are so excited to highlight professionals who have dedicated their time to learn more about best practice, evidence-based care options for people on the autism spectrum.

You can check it out [HERE](#).



## NEW STUDY: TREATMENT OF NIGHT WAKINGS IN AUTISTIC CHILDREN



This summer, Dr. Kristin Sohl was published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* in an article titled *A Practice Pathway for the Treatment of Night Wakings in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*.

Dr. Sohl and her fellow researchers reviewed and identified 76 scholarly articles that provided data on night waking in children with ASD. Based on the available literature, they are proposing an updated practice pathway to identify and treat night wakings in children with ASD.

One primary difference between the original pathway, Autism Speaks Autism Treatment Network and Autism Intervention Research Network on Physical Health (ATN/AIR-P), and the proposed revised pathway is that the latter distinguishes between children who have difficulty initiating sleep vs. those who have difficulty staying asleep. The inclusion of night wakings in the revised pathway was added as researchers saw that at least 34% of children with ASD have night wakings either alone or in combination with delayed sleep onset.

This article also offers interesting insight into previous research on sleep disturbances in autistic children. One of the researcher's observations was that most common tool used for reporting night wakings was parent report via sleep diary. This makes other important components of the studies difficult to measure, such as frequency of night wakings.

Interested in reading more? Check out the article [HERE](#).

### GLOBAL ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES PROGRAM MAP

Are you looking for an ECHO Autism Communities Program near you?

You can now view and learn more about ECHO Autism Communities Programs across the globe using our ECHO Autism Program Map. Access addresses, websites, and more for ECHO Autism programs near you.

Check it out today [HERE](#).



## ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERIES: THE AUTISM SPECTRUM - LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

When most people hear “ECHO Autism Communities,” the first thing that comes to mind are our virtual flagship programs developed at the University of Missouri and our work as the ECHO Autism Communities Superhub, where we train and provide technical assistance to organizations who aim to develop disability and mental health focused ECHO programs across the globe. While our virtual learning platforms develop communities of practice for a variety of professionals in health care, education, and advocacy, we are also committed to providing information about autism best-practices beyond the professional scope and engage with communities.

During the months of August and September 2023, select members from the ECHO Autism Communities (EAC) team, who have a unique blend of professional and personal experience, are hosting an in-person Caregiver Skills Support Series event titled, The Autism Spectrum – Let’s Talk About It! During each event, the EAC team will share critical information that people on the autism spectrum and their families should know! An interactive question-and-answer session will follow, as well as an opportunity for attendees to access free resources regarding developmental milestones in young children from the CDC’s Learn the Signs. Act Early. program and a wide variety of resources specific to autism.

In person events will be held in Lake of the Ozarks, Cape Girardeau, St. Louis City, and Lebanon, Missouri. Please check our ECHO Autism Communities social media platforms for event details! Information presented will be relevant to autistic adults, family members of people with autism, and anyone else who wants to learn more about autism. **NEED MORE DETAILS?** Contact: [echoautism@missouri.edu](mailto:echoautism@missouri.edu)



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Autistic Adult



Alicia Curran, BS, Grad Cert  
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## **ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITY PARTNERS: UC DAVIS HEALTH | MIND INSTITUTE**

This month we are turning the spotlight on the UC Davis Health | Mind Institute. This team conducted their ECHO Autism: Early Intervention “EI” Strategies program from January through March of 2023 with great success. This ECHO Autism program investigated the effectiveness of ECHO-EI at increasing study participants’ confidence and knowledge of family-centered and culturally sensitive EI services. This six-week series occurred on the 1st and 2nd Thursday of the month from 12:00 – 1:15 pm with an average turnout of 48 participants. It targeted early intervention professionals such as early intervention therapists, developmental specialists, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, behavior analysts, infant educators, psychologists, social workers, infant mental health providers and case managers. The curriculum for the session didactics included Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions, Partnering with Caregivers, Coaching: Parent Implemented Interventions, Using Visual Supports and Prompting with Families, Embedding Communication Strategies at Home, and Supporting Diverse Families.

To assess changes in confidence and knowledge, participants completed a clinic evaluation survey (CES) following each session and a pre/post questionnaire before and after completing the program. The CES also included questions about satisfaction and intentions to change clinical practice.

A comparison of the pre- and post-program questionnaires showed overall improvements in participants’ confidence and knowledge of best family-centered EI practices. Evaluation of the CESs revealed that participants strongly endorsed gaining confidence and knowledge of the didactic topics presented each session. Participants reported satisfaction in the educational experience, and the method of instructional delivery. They also reported practice changes including implementing evidence-based practice strategies to facilitate family participation and partnership with EI teams.

Congratulations to Robin Stewart and her team for another successful ECHO Autism program. You may contact Robin at [rjstewart@ucdavis.edu](mailto:rjstewart@ucdavis.edu) with any questions.

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