ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES

REFLECTIONS

ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES PARTNER LAUNCH CLASS OF AUGUST 2023
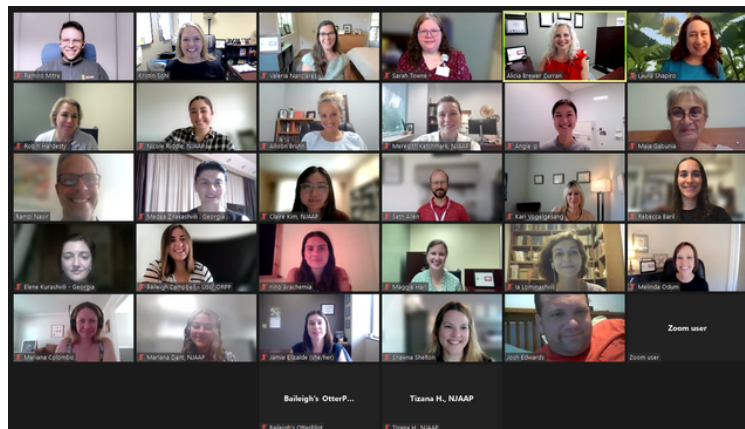
Advancing care together.
autism care network
autism speaks

ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES

Project ECHO

We had an incredible turnout for our August 2023 ECHO Autism Communities Partner Launch Training! Look at these organizations who are changing the world!

- Utah State University - Center for Persons with Disabilities
- Autism Speaks
- The University of Missouri
- The University of Iowa - Scanlan Center for School Mental Health
- American Academy of Pediatrics, New Jersey Chapter
- Sunny Hill Health Centre at BC Children's Hospital – Canada
- University of Alberta- Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital - Canada
- McGill University Health Centre - Canada
- Mental Health Center Gamma – Tbilisi Georgia

We are grateful to Autism Speaks for their sponsorship of the ECHO Autism Communities Global Superhub.

New ECHO Autism Program Launches:
- September 19 - Clinica Neuroinfantil Divino Nino in Nicaragua
- September 26 – Instituto para el Desarrollo Infantil Arie in Peru

SAVE THE DATE!

2024 ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 11, 2024

ECHO AUTISM 2024 SYMPOSIUM

ECHO Autism Communities is excited to announce the 2024 Symposium date: April 11, 2024. Each month, we are highlighting presentations from our 2023 Symposium. This month, we are featuring the graphic recordings and participant quotes about their biggest takeaway from the presentation "Implementing the WHO-Caregivers Skills Training (CST) Program in Low Resourced Communities".

"I love the idea of teaching parents, whom are their own expert. We live in a time with too few professionals and parents need to be equipped with the skills to help their children strive."

"A way to support families where they can feel supported and confident in their abilities to learn and use skills with their child. Reaching families who may have limited options or resources."

"Options for rural settings to receive additional services. I liked the last piece of the intervention which focused on mental health/ well-being of the caretaker. What a great idea!"

"I now have a new resource to look into for my families with Autism."

"The fact that this intervention can be modified to fit the socioeconomic barriers to treatment. This can make it very accessible for underserved communities. Also, the fact that it does not require a diagnosis so families can take advantage of this treatment while they are on a waitlist for diagnostic assessment."

EYE-TRACKING TOOL AND IT'S ROLE IN AUTISM EVALUATIONS

Two studies released earlier this month suggest that a recently developed eye-tracking tool could help health care professionals diagnose children as young as 16 months with more certainty. While the tool will not replace skilled clinicians, it could help healthcare professionals gain more objective information when completing diagnostic assessments.

In this article, Dr. Kristin Sohl, shared how the age of diagnosis is on average later for children of color as well as those living in rural and underserved communities. She indicates that in the hands of a skilled generalist, this new tool may help close the diagnosis age gap between communities.

You can read the full article HERE.

ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES IN CAPE GIRARDEAU

Recently, three ECHO Autism Communities team members presented information on best practices for raising children on the autism spectrum in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

Alicia Brewer Curran, Shawna Shelton, and Crystalena Oberweiser visited Morning Star Behavioral Associates and discussed different support systems and background information on raising autistic children to become successful adults, each speaking from their own specialties and experiences.

This presentation was featured in a local article in the Southeast Missourian. Read the full article and learn more HERE. Photo: Christopher Borro

ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITY PARTNERS: MCGILL UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTRE

This month we are turning the spotlight on ECHO Autism partner, McGill University Health Centre and a recent ECHO Autism series they completed on comorbidities in ASD. This group of researchers collaborated on a study, and then presented a poster about the study at the International Society for Autism Research in May 2023 in Stockholm, Sweden. The poster was titled "Examining the Characteristics of Clinicians in an ECHO Autism Program".

This ECHO Autism program consisted of seven, bi-weekly 90-minute sessions open to clinicians in any profession who work in the field of neurodevelopmental disorders. The focus of the program was co-occurring medical/neurodevelopmental disorders with ASD. The curriculum topics for this program included:

- How a geneticist assesses a child with autism
- Language Disorder
- Frequently used genetic tests for children with autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in ASD
- Epilepsy and ASD
- Managing Sleep Problems in Autism
- The alphabet soup of diagnosis: A parent perspective

Participants completed the following pre and post-surveys: demographic, knowledge, and self-efficacy.
The goal of the study was to evaluate the following questions:

1. Is there a link between clinicians' knowledge of ASD and their perceived self-efficacy in diagnosing and managing the needs of individuals with ADSD at baseline?
2. Are indicators of experience with ASD related to the clinician's baseline knowledge of ASD and self-efficacy?
3. Does clinician knowledge and self-efficacy increase after participation in their ECHO Autism program?

This team concluded that the ECHO Autism program led to increases in clinician knowledge and self-efficacy, and that ECHO Autism has the potential to increase the accessibility of high-quality ASD training opportunities which is crucial to ensuring individuals with ASD receive best practice care.

The authors are Julie Scorah, Myriam L. H. Beauchamp, Kaela Amorim, and Mayada Elsabbagh. They are from the following organizations: McGill University, Azrieli Centre for Autism Research, Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital, and Research Institute – McGill University Health Centre.

View their poster HERE

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