Est. December, 2001

www.autismtrainingva.org
Vision and Mission

The Vision of the Virginia Autism Council (VAC)

The Virginia Autism Council envisions individuals with autism fully participating in every aspect of society.

The Mission of the Virginia Autism Council

• provides leadership and coordination for state agencies and service providers.
• increases knowledge and understanding of autism in the wider community in order to maximize outcomes for people with autism.
Purpose of VAC

• Gather, synthesize, and distribute knowledge;
• Develop best practice tools;
• Promote the interests of citizens affected by autism;
• Identify and address gaps in the system.
Council membership includes representatives from:

- Autism Society of America
- Commonwealth Autism Service
- DMAS, DRS, DBHDS
- Public and Private Schools
- SECEP
- VA Colleges and Universities
- Individuals with autism and their families
- Autism Center for Excellence at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)
- The Arc of Virginia
- Virginia Autism Resource Center (VARC)
- VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities
- VA Board for People with Disabilities
- VA Dept. of Education
- Early Intervention (Part C) providers
- Virginia Institute of Autism
- Local CSBs and Private Providers
Autism Council Endeavors

- Development of Training
- Training Calendar and Website
- Online Education
- Live Training
- Tuition Reimbursement Program
- Projects with Adult Services
- Skill Competencies
SKILL COMPETENCIES FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS IN VIRGINIA SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

• First Published in October, 2005
• Revised September 15, 2010
• Developed to guide best practice in supporting individuals with autism across the state
• Used in all fields of service delivery
• Based upon consistent findings in current research
Why Develop the Skill Competencies?
Outcomes

- Early childhood
- School
- Transition
- Adult Life
Who is Working with Individuals with ASD?

- Everyone!
- General Educators
- Special Educators
- Early Intervention Specialist
- Adult Service Providers
- Related Service Personnel
- Every kind of Educational Specialist
- Direct Service Providers
Individual Need

• Have goal to go to College – 23% - Third lowest of all disabilities
• Have goal for post-secondary training – 18% - Second lowest of all disabilities
• Have goal for competitive employment – 22% - Lowest of all disabilities
• Had paid work in last year – 22% - Lowest of all disabilities
• Live independently – 4 to 5%
Professional Need

- Autism has grown
- Professionals regularly report a lack of training in autism
- Demand for skills outstrips supply of knowledgeable professionals
For a professional to be effective, we must establish:

• What is the required knowledge?

• What are the required skills?

• What are the required abilities?
What **Drives** Professional Preparation Programs in Autism?

- Increased Awareness
- Demand for Information
- State Teacher Licensure
- Certificates in Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Research Centers of Excellence
- Educational Standards or Competencies
- Need to Serve Population
How were the Skill Competencies developed?

- Originally designed by subcommittee of the Virginia Autism Council
- Reviewed by state and national experts in the field of autism
VAC Competencies Development Process

1. Need for comprehensive document
2. Competencies drafted in Autism Council subcommittee
3. Statewide Stakeholder Reviews
4. Comptencies published and disseminated
5. Revisions
7. Used to develop rubric for reimbursement program
8. Used to develop system for Autism Certificate Courses
Use of the Skill Competencies

- Help identify the areas of need for education and support
- Guide development of programs
- Guide development of university-based classes
- Guide training and staff development
  - Individual teacher
  - Group professional development
Competency Areas

• General Autism Competency Statements
• Environmental Structure and Visual Supports Competencies
• Comprehensive Instructional Programming Competencies
• Communication Competencies
• Social Skill Competencies
• Behavior Competencies
• Sensory Motor Development Competencies
• Independence and Aptitude Competencies
Who should demonstrate these skills?

• Paraprofessionals/Direct Service Professionals
• Professionals
• Master Professionals
• Advanced Degree, Program Developer, or Specialist
How do you Envision using the Skill Competencies?
How can I Access the Skill Competencies?

• Available to download on the website at www.autismtrainingva.org
  – PDF format
  – 20 page printout

• Limited number of bound copies available
  – Contact the VA Autism Council (info@autismtrainingva.org) for print copies
For More Information:

Website:
www.autismtrainingva.org

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