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Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

2014-2018 Technical Report

*Leading Educational Excellence through Research,
Innovation, Collaboration, and Engagement*

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**Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research
Technical Report 2018**

**Prepared for:
Maine Department of Education
Special Services**

December 2018

**Prepared by:
Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis, Ph.D.
Donna Doherty, M. S.**

**Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research
College of Education and Human Development
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Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research
2014-2018 Technical Report

December 2018

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This technical report outlines the work and accomplishments of the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) since launching in 2014.



The Maine Department of Education provides significant support and funding for the activities and outreach of the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research. Special thanks to Jan Breton, Director of Special Services Birth-20, Maine Department of Education, for her ongoing support for this project.

Introduction

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) is dedicated to improving outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) throughout the spectrum and life cycle. We work to build statewide capacity in support of our mission through leadership, training, professional development, technical assistance, collaborative consultation, technology, and research. MAIER is located at the University of Maine in Orono.

MAIER is a unique partnership between the Maine Department of Education, Office of Special Services and the University of Maine, College of Education and Human Development, Special Education program. Established in 2014 with significant financial support from the Maine Department of Education (MDOE), these two organizations joined forces to promote evidence-based strategies and effective practices for educators and professionals working with individuals with ASD and for supporting families impacted by ASD.

Education and Professional Development

The Institute serves as the primary source for education and training concerning evidence-based practices for professionals working with children and families impacted by autism spectrum disorders, and for undergraduate and graduate students aspiring to serve children, families, schools, and community service providers. MAIER also provides professional development through the Maine Autism Leader Team (MALT) trainings and associated coaching support. MALT teams receive training to implement evidence-based practices to support individuals with autism spectrum disorder in their schools and agencies.

MAIER Family Partnership

MAIER's Family Partnership (MFP) is dedicated to providing outreach to individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders across the state of Maine. Together, MAIER staff and families work to identify issues of concern for Maine families and collaborate on projects to promote greater awareness and acceptance, develop print and online resources, address access to services, and support research efforts. Individuals and families involved in the MFP have been integrally involved in the development and revision of the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD*, the *Places and Spaces Project*, and all MFP events.

MAIER's Family Partnership also works with community partners, such as the Maine Discovery Museum and local YMCAs, to promote inclusion and greater understanding through staff education, collaborating on special events for families impacted by ASD,

and by providing assistance in developing tools and supports for visitors.

Early Start Maine

Early Start Maine is an initiative of the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research. The Early Start Maine team is comprised of nationally certified Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) providers. In partnership with Maine Child Development Services, our team provides training, consultation, and ongoing support to early intervention providers statewide who are working with toddlers with autism.

This comprehensive summary is organized by programs, resources, and community collaborations and outreach in the following sections: (I) Faculty and Staff, (II) MAIER Family Partnership, (III) Professional Development, (IV) Early Start Maine, (V) Community Outreach, (VI) Resources, (VII) Collaborations, and (VIII) Website. (IX) Tables and (X) Appendices are located at the end of this report to offer additional information and data helpful to understanding the depth and breadth of MAIER's reach and impact within the state of Maine and beyond.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

I. Faculty & Staff

I. Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research Faculty and Staff

Deborah Rooks-Ellis, Ph.D.

Director, Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research
Assistant Professor Special Education, Program Coordinator
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Bio: Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis is an assistant professor of special education at the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development and director of the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research.

Deborah's education, experience and research interests focus on evidence-based practices to support very young children with disabilities and their families. individuals with low incidence disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder. This includes research focused on personnel preparation and professional development to support educators working in the field of special education. Deborah has been awarded two Office of Special Education federal personnel preparation grants, as both principal investigator and co-PI, totaling \$3 million. Additionally, Deborah has been awarded \$1 million in cooperative agreements with the state of Maine to focus on providing professional development to support to children and adolescents with autism and their families.

Donna Doherty, M.S.

MAIER Family Partnership Director/Research Associate
Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research
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Bio: Donna Doherty's education, experience, and research interests focus on children's health and developmental disabilities, and their impact on family life. Past work includes research, program development and support for families affected by disorders of the corpus callosum for the Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum (ACC) Network at the University of Maine and for the National Organization for Disorders of the Corpus Callosum (NODCC) in Yorba Linda, Calif.

Donna is currently the Director of the MAIER Family Partnership (MFP) at the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research. The MFP works with individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders to promote greater awareness, education, support and research. Donna served as project coordinator and co-editor of the "Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders" booklets. She works to enhance community partnerships with Maine agencies and organizations dedicated to

autism spectrum disorders, and partners with UMaine students and faculty to support student experiences in the field of autism.

As a research associate, Donna leads and collaborates in scientific and educational program evaluations. Specific skills include the development of research protocols, online survey data collection, conducting interviews and focus groups, data analysis, and report writing. Recent projects include course and program evaluations for a nonprofit genomics/genetic laboratory, National Science Foundation-funded summer undergraduate research programs, and a U.S. Department of Education funded teacher training program to improve classroom instruction for English Language Learners in Maine.

Sarah Howorth, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Special Education, University of Maine

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Bio: Sarah K. Howorth is an assistant professor of special education in the School of Learning and Teaching, part of the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development. Her research interests include assistive technology, augmented reality, reading comprehensions, positive behavior interventions and supports, and improving employment and transition outcomes for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities.

Sarah is a board-certified behavior analyst, and has 18 years of experience in special education. She has taught as a classroom teacher in Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, and Shanghai (China). In 2015 she received the Herb Prehm Student Research Award from the Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities. She was a research partner on a Pennsylvania Early Literacy Grant. In addition, she has taught the professional development seminar: “EMS and Autism: What Do First Responders Need to know?” Her leadership positions in professional organizations include serving as Children’s Advocacy Network Coordinator for Council for Exceptional Children’s Innovations in Special Education Technology Division (CEC-ISET); board member of the Northwest Pennsylvania Autism Society, 2015-2018.

Graduate Assistant

Brooklin R. Jones, B.A.

Graduate Assistant, MAIER

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Brooklin Renae Jones is currently a graduate assistant for Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research at the University of Maine. Brooklin began her career at the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor's of Arts in International Studies and continued her education at the University of Maine with the College of Social Work in 2017. She is currently assisting on research about high-quality professional development, as well as literacy with and without technology for students with disabilities. Brooklin loves to travel and has been to 27 countries.

Early Start Maine Research Associates

Susane Boulette, M.Ed.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Susane Boulette, M.Ed., is a research associate with the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER). She holds a Masters in Early Childhood Special Education, specializing in early intervention. Sue has worked with young children and their families for the last 12 years in a variety of environments as a case manager, developmental therapist and early interventionist. Prior to that she was the owner, operator and teacher of Sunny Start Nursery School.

Brooke Getchell

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Brooke Getchell, is a research associate with MAIER. She began her journey with early intervention in 2015 working in a center-based program for toddlers who required individualized supports. In 2016, she began her work with the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) as a primary service provider supporting toddlers with autism as well as their families. She has an educational background in social work, working towards a MSW from The University of New England.

Shilo Goodhue, M.Ed.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Shilo Goodhue started her career in early childhood education as owner and teacher of a high quality inclusive childcare and preschool program. Prior to becoming an ESDM research associate, she worked in early intervention, where she supported children with disabilities and their families in the home setting. Shilo has three years of experience implementing the Early Start Denver Model with children.

Jill Hamm, B.A.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Jill Hamm is an Early Start Denver Model research associate at the University of Maine. She earned a B.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders and Child Development and Family Relations and will complete the Early Childhood Special Education Master's program at the University of Maine in summer 2019. Jill is an Early Start Denver Model primary service provider working with toddlers with autism and their families while completing national certification for the Early Start Denver Model.

Bethan Jerome, M.Ed.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Bethan Jerome, M.Ed. is a research associate with MAIER. She holds a Masters in Early Childhood Special Education/Autism, and has worked as a home-based early intervention provider with toddlers with ASD, as an itinerant special educator supporting young children with ASD in community preschools, and as the senior lead teacher in an inclusive ABA-based preschool specializing in autism.

Lauren Lantagne, M.Ed.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate.

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Bio: Lauren Lantagne M.Ed., is a research associate with the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER). Lauren earned her B.S. in Early Childhood Special Education at the University of Maine Farmington and M.Ed at the University of Maine Orono, specializing in Early Intervention. Lauren has worked as a Service Coordinator,

Special Educator, and providing Early Start Maine services in Maine's Part C Early Intervention program.

Karen Pratt, M.S., OTR/L

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Karen Pratt, MS, OTR/L owned and operated a private child care for 20 years before resuming her education and earning a Bachelor's degree in Social and Behavioral Science and a Master's in Occupational Therapy (OT) from the University of Southern Maine. She worked at Child Development Services (CDS) for seven years as an early interventionist supporting children with disabilities and as an Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) primary service provider supporting toddlers diagnosed with autism. She is currently a research associate with the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research providing consultation and support to CDS therapists who are using the ESDM in their work with toddlers with autism and their families.

Debra Rainey, M.Ed.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate

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Bio: Deb Rainey, is an Early Childhood Specialist with over 25 years experience in early childhood special education. She earned a B.S. in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Maine in Farmington and a M.Ed. in Early Intervention from the University of Maine, Orono, with a concentration in autism. In addition, Deb completed certification in the Leadership in Neurodevelopmental Disorders (LEND) program and Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) for teaching young children with autism. She has worked with young children and families in a variety of settings and programs over the years providing special instruction as well as consultation to support the inclusion of all young children and families in community settings.

Most recently in her position with the University of Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER), Deb provides training, consultation, and coaching to professionals to build their capacity to implement ESDM throughout the state. Deb is committed to the field of early childhood education/early childhood special education and keeps current with best practice and evidence-based methods to meet the needs of young children with autism and families.

Shannon Smith, M.Ed.

Early Start Maine (ESM) Research Associate
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Bio: Shannon Smith worked for several years providing family support services to young children with disabilities and their families in NH before pursuing and earning a Master's Degree in Education, specializing in Early Intervention. She has worked as a lead teacher in a special purpose preschool, a Special Educator for Part C Early Intervention supporting infants and toddlers, and as an ESDM primary service provider for toddlers experiencing ASD. Shannon has worked as an Early Start Maine Consultant since April 2016.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

II. MAIER Family Partnership

II. MAIER Family Partnership

Introduction

In the spring of 2014, MAIER staff gathered with a small group of Maine parents to launch MAIER's Family Partnership (MFP), a group dedicated to supporting the mission of MAIER through outreach to individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders. With the goal of identifying and addressing unmet needs and concerns of parents of children with ASD, the MFP has led projects, events, and activities designed to provide information, support, and resources while encouraging family-to-family connections and positive family experiences.

More recently, the MFP expanded its focus to include outreach to the greater Maine community by collaborating with Maine organizations and businesses interested in better serving families impacted by ASD. Our goal is to increase awareness and understanding of families that include a member with ASD and to reduce fears and myths surrounding their inclusion in typical family events and community activities.

Progress

In the five years since inception, the MFP has grown from a small group of three mothers first invited to collaborate on the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD*, to include contact with more than 731 individuals, families, and young adults with ASD across the state of Maine. This number continues to grow through our outreach at MFP and Autism events, MAIER newsletters and mailings, our website, and via phone calls and email correspondence.

Maine Family Partnership projects and family resources have reflected the needs expressed by Maine families. One of the sentiments we heard in the very beginning was expressed by an MFP mother who wrote, *"I find being a parent of a child with autism challenging when I often don't know why he acts as he does or how to help how he is feeling.... For me as mother and woman, I feel often quite alone as a special needs parent."* MAIER staff continues to solicit the input and participation of families and caregivers at all stages of new projects.

In 2015, the MFP-led effort successfully developed and published the first *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders*, a three volume set of booklets designed to provide families with clear, concise information about autism, and Maine-specific guidance to services and supports from the time of autism screening and assessments through the high school years. In 2018, we again worked with families and professionals, including two young adults on the spectrum, to review, revise, and update the *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders*. This second edition includes

new content to address adulthood on the spectrum, personal safety for individuals with autism, augmentative/alternative communication, and new resources.

The MAIER website targets the need for reliable, evidence-based, and research supported resources for Maine families via a Family Resource Directory. This directory is continually updated and currently includes information about and links to Maine Agencies and National/Federal Resources, Family Life and Developmental information, developmental toolkits and resources, and a Community Calendar of events for families impacted by ASD.

The “Places and Spaces” MFP Project, initiated in 2017, offers an online resource for families to find and share information about fun, welcoming, and safe recreation around the state of Maine. In addition to helping families discover and share new options for family time, this resource provides families guidance and encouragement to step out and try new experiences with their children. This project is ongoing and our goal is to continue to encourage family participation through submissions to the directory listings and to add engaging tools (i.e., educational videos) to support our community partners (businesses, recreational areas) in their efforts to include, welcome, and accommodate families impacted by ASD.

MAIER staff provides additional outreach to Maine families impacted by ASD by attending autism and/or disability related community events and through direct communications. Thus far, the MFP has engaged with community autism groups in Aroostook County and in Rockland/Midcoast area, offering information tables and meeting local families. Since 2015, we have emailed five issues of our *Pathways* newsletter, which includes a “Family Focus” section, directly to families on our mailing list. Families receive additional e-blasts throughout the year with news of interest and event announcements.

The MAIER Family Partnership has held 16 family events since its inception, often sparked by a parent idea, request or connection, and in tandem with local families and community support. Several are popular recurring events, and others have targeted different geographic areas of the state. With a focus on family fun, education & resource delivery, and family-to-family support, these events, both large and small, are helping connect Maine families to resources and developing supports to enhance their lives. In the coming months, we will host three family social/recreational events, and offer a parent/caregiver workshop presented by a national expert on sexuality and relationship education for persons with developmental disabilities. Thanks to our grant support and the generosity of individual and business donors, all family events are free to attendees, removing the potential for financial barriers to participation.

Family Partnership events also foster community partnerships in support of our mission. MAIER staff has provided both informal and formal support and training to staff and volunteers of the MDM, two YMCA's, three local businesses, and to UM student volunteers. In addition, we have developed relationships with education and support partners such as Autism Safety Training & Education (ASET), the *Courageous Steps* non-profit, a representative for *ID a Kid* child identification kits, and most recently, with the Adaptive Outdoor Education Center in Carrabassett Valley and Maine Bound Climbing Center at UM.

We continue to explore opportunities to develop community relationships to support our mission. IN 2019 we have plans to meet with a the artistic director of the Some Theater Company in Orono to explore their interest making their theater accessible to individuals of all abilities. This may include connecting with individuals with autism interested in participating in their productions and/or offering a special showing of their upcoming play for families impacted by ASD.

Results

The MFP has achieved results in the areas of Projects and Resources, Outreach, and Family Partnership events. Table 1 displays detailed descriptions of these achievements since 2014.

By far, the most wide-reaching impact has stemmed from publishing the *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders*. Since its publication in the fall 2015, more than 3500 copies of the first edition have been distributed throughout the state to affected families and the professionals who work with them. We are currently in the process of distributing our Second Edition, published in the Fall 2018. In addition, online family resources available on the MAIER website and in the "Family Focus" section of our *Pathways* newsletter are also a source of reliable information and guidance for Maine families.

The relationships we have built with local families and the greater Maine community is our strength. One only has to observe families enjoying a day together at York's Wild Kingdom, or an afternoon at the Maine Discovery Museum or the YMCA in a "sensory-friendly" setting, to see the benefit to not only the child with ASD, but to the whole family. Families frequently make connections with others, sharing stories, advice, and encouragement, as well as email addresses or phone numbers. Parents, individuals with ASD, and siblings have stepped forward to volunteer for MFP events, further building a sense of community, "giving back," and accomplishment for this community.

The impact of our events and outreach to Maine families can be illustrated in a sample of the emails we receive from families after these events. Below are three examples of recent correspondence.

It's often times a challenging consideration when you are investing a lot of time driving to a location, spending money on entry fees, and simply encountering the unexpected without ever knowing if you will be able to stay or if this will be the day you need to leave after going through all of that. Having this day be free financially, and probably most importantly judgment free, was truly appreciated by our family.

Our two children, who are non-verbal on the spectrum, had fun, and we as a family were able to spend time together, which is sometimes very hard to do with our already busy routine. Thank-you for the opportunity to just enjoy ourselves at York's Animal Kingdom.

It was such an awesome, supportive environment today. Climbing is an activity we never would have tried because of all the unknowns. Would he like it? Would he try it? How would we weather all the stares from a meltdown and negative talk? We didn't have to sweat any of that today; everyone there was wonderful and we got to try something new as a family.

All three illustrate the challenges many MFP families face in their desire to experience typical family recreational activities, and their joy at overcoming their fears and the practical challenges to have such a positive family experience in a supportive environment.

Our home at the University of Maine provides us with the opportunity to enrich the experiences of UMaine students through volunteer opportunities at MFP events. Undergraduate and Graduate students in Education, Special Education, Communication Sciences & Disorders, and/or Communication and Journalism, and most recently, the Student MEA group, have witnessed the day to day experiences, joys, and challenges for families impacted by ASD and gained skills in interacting with and supporting these community members.

Recommendations/Future Planning

- Continue outreach to Maine families in new geographic areas while supporting continued connections with current MFP families. E-blasts to MFP mailing list 4x/yr.; Four or more MFP family events/yr.
- Increase awareness of and visits to website resources for families. (E-blasts; direct contact)

- Continue outreach to new community partners to raise autism awareness and encourage inclusion of families that include a person with ASD. (Two-three new partners/yr.)
- Complete “Community Tips” of *Places and Spaces* Project in 2019 with educational videos. Explore potential of online tutorials for community partner training.
- Explore new partnerships and foster current relationships with Autism-related organizations for collaborative events and/or projects. (Ongoing)
- Survey MFP families to measure the use of MAIER family resources and of the participation and impact of participation in MFP events, including benefits, individual and family impact, and challenges and barriers to attending.

Conclusions

In the last five years, the MAIER Family Partnership (MFP) has grown into an important addition to the supports and opportunities available to families impacted by autism in the state of Maine. We are of service to families through our print and online resources, our outreach efforts, and our family events, and support community partners through informal and formal training and collaborative events. Although the individuals who are active in the MFP change over time, we are continually infused with new energy and spirit from Maine families and community partners. Together we are building a sense of connection and acceptance, encouraging relationships among families, and raising awareness and acceptance of individuals with autism in our communities.

See **Table 1** for Maine Family Partnership Accomplishments

See **Appendix A** for Maine Family Partnership Outreach.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

III. Professional Development & Trainings

III. MAIER Professional Development & Trainings

Introduction

The Maine Autism Institute offers several options for education professionals and support staff to receive autism training through our workshops, school-based teams, and online training. In collaboration with University of Maine Communication Sciences and Disorders and Special Education faculty, MAIER supports a graduate level, 4-course sequence leading to a Graduate Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders for educators, administrators and related service providers seeking advanced education for leadership roles in educational programming for students with ASD. The following section will outline MAIER's Professional Development (PD) opportunities and report on the progress and achievements since 2014.

Progress

- PD Series
 - Annual workshops (Contact hours (6 hours) are awarded at each event, and CEUs are available upon request.)
 - **PD Archives (*online*)**: Through special arrangements, nine sessions of the Professional Development Series offered in 2016-17 captured for Livestream have been archived for online viewing via the MAIER website. Professionals and the general public can access these PD videos at a time of their convenience for educational purposes and to earn contact hours. As of 10/31/2018, there have been 81 viewings, with many participants using awarded contact hours to meet teaching re-certification requirements.
- Maine Autism Leader Teams
 - Since inception, 48 MALT teams have received intensive training and on-site coaching about evidence-based practices for working with students with autism. MALT is a network of Maine school leaders that facilitate and implement evidence-based practices related to ASD on a school-wide and district-wide basis. Training is customized to specifically meet the current needs of school teams.
- Targeted Professionals Training Offerings
 - Occupational therapists
 - Early interventionists
 - Educational technicians
- Special Offerings
 - SCERTS: The SCERTS® Model is a research-based educational approach and multidisciplinary framework that directly addresses the core challenges faced by children and persons with ASD and related

disabilities, and their families. SCERTS refers to Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support (Prizant & Weatherby, 2005). This two-day training, presented by Amy Laurent, Ph.D., OTR/L (coauthor of the SCERTS® model), led to a thorough understanding of the SCERTS model and provided participants with the knowledge and skills to implement the model in their classrooms. Specific guidelines for helping a child become a competent and confident social communicator, while preventing problem behaviors that interfere with learning and the development of relationships, were provided to participants.

- Collaborations for Professional Development Offerings
 - Association for Maine Behavior Analysts, AMeBA: Severe Problem Behavior of Persons with ASD, Gregory P. Hanley, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Governor's Hill Mansion, 136 State St., Augusta, ME
 - Southern Penobscot Regional Program for Children Exceptionalities (SPRPCE): Building Resiliency in the School-aged Child, Elyse Pratt-Ronco, Ph.D. 5-part series. Bangor
- Graduate Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders
 - A 4-course certificate sequence was developed to prepare experienced educators, administrators and related service providers to assume a leadership role in the development and implementation of educational programs for students with autism in school settings. This certificate program provides critical knowledge and practical skills necessary to address the needs of children and students across the autism spectrum.
 - To date, 15 educators have completed the Graduate Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders year-long program.
 - SED 528: Educational Methods for Students with Autism - Summer offering. This course is designed to assist educators in developing strategies and techniques to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in accessing the general education environment to the fullest extent possible. This introductory class is designed to familiarize participants with the complexity of the autism spectrum.
 - SED 585: Social Communication for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders - Fall offering. This course examines communication, including an overview of typical communication and language development, the difference in autism speech and language development, assessments of communication, augmentative communication supports, visual supports, and the interrelationships between communication and socialization.

- SED 563: Positive Behavioral Supports for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders - Summer offering. This course provides training in behavioral assessment, support, and intervention for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Emphasizes evidence-based practices including functional behavioral assessment and communication training, social skills instruction, self-management, and antecedent and broader environmental interventions.
- SED 556: Assessment for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Severe Disabilities - Spring offering. This course provides advanced training in assessing individual learning needs of students with autism spectrum disorders and students with severe disabilities, emphasizing ecological inventories, person-centered planning and quality of life indicators. A value-based system of respecting the individual and individual capabilities within a fully inclusive society is presented as the underlying philosophy. Applied assignments will allow students to demonstrate specific skills that reflect this philosophy. Course content will be presented in a series of modules that contain information on specific topics related to the assessment and intervention of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and students with severe disabilities.

Results

To date, MAIER has offered 78 professional development and training opportunities with more than 3500 participants. For a list of all professional development opportunities, see **Table 2**. **Appendix B** provides speaker biographies.

Recommendations/Future Planning

- Continue to offer professional development opportunities
- Evaluate the impact of the PD
- Examine high quality PD components used to engage participants
- Offer options including webinars to increase participant access

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

IV. Early Start Maine

IV. Early Start Maine

Introduction

Maine's early intervention IDEA Part C program is defined by the routines-based early intervention model, family-centered services that are provided in natural environments (McWilliam, 2010). This model uses a transdisciplinary team approach in which the primary service provider receives frequent support from other related service professionals, and in turn, serves as the family's coach to strengthen parenting competence and confidence and promote child learning.

The Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) developed by Rogers and Dawson (2010), is an early intensive, comprehensive, NDBI designed specifically for young children ages 12 months to 60 months with or at risk for ASD (Schreibman et al., 2015). Formally manualized in the *Early Start Denver Model for Young Children with Autism*, this intervention specifically targets imitation, nonverbal communication, joint attention, verbal communication, social development, and play. The ESDM consists of the following: (a) intervention protocols comprised of operant teaching techniques, (b) intervention goals that are socially significant, and (c) intervention results that are analyzed objectively by assessing a child's progress before, during, and after the intervention, and (d) use of a treatment notebook to organize teaching plans, data sheets, and questions or notes to the child's intervention team.

The intervention begins with the *Early Start Denver Model Curriculum Checklist for Young Children with Autism*. The checklist is used to comprehensively assess the skills of toddlers and preschoolers with ASD across multiple developmental domains and to establish individualized teaching objectives. Administered every 12 weeks, it is an essential component of the intervention program described in the authoritative manual. On average, 25-30 learning objectives and subsequent teaching steps are developed for the child's program. These objectives are targeted during each intervention session, and child progress on objectives is monitored with 15-minute incremental data collection points. The child is re-assessed using the checklist every 12 weeks to gauge developmental level in all domains and to monitor progress, with updates to the child's program occurring as needed.

Early Intervention Team

For very young children with ASD who are eligible for the state's early intervention services, the ESDM is a service consideration for the Individualized Family Service Plan team. The ESDM is embedded within the state's existing early intervention IDEA Part C program. The frequency and intensity of the ESDM intervention and family coaching are determined by the Individualized Family Service Plan team, which includes the

family, the ESDM research associate, the primary service provider, and other related service providers who have evaluated the child for eligibility purposes. The team discusses eligibility assessment results and determines the individualized frequency and intensity of services needed. The availability of the family to participate in the intervention is also a consideration.

Progress

The statewide ESDM team consists of nine nationally certified ESDM research associates, and 43 early intervention primary service providers trained to implement the ESDM intervention and family coaching. Roles and responsibilities for these team members are different, and collaboration is essential. The ESDM research associates are responsible for the following components: (a) assess the child's development using the ESDM Curriculum Checklist, (b) develop the child's program based on the outcomes of the checklist, (c) monitor program implementation fidelity of the primary service providers, (d) provide ongoing support and coaching to the primary service providers, and (e) monitor child progress through a systematic data collection process. A primary service provider is coached daily by an assigned ESDM research associate at each ESDM session until the primary service provider has achieved state-recognized fidelity of implementation, typically a minimum of 6-8 months. Generalization of learned behaviors and maintenance gains for children with ASD largely depends on the persistent and consistent implementation of naturalistic behavioral procedures; therefore, provider fidelity of implementation is vital to child outcomes. Once fidelity has been achieved, the primary service provider receives weekly coaching, or more often as needed, and fidelity is assessed quarterly. To date, 33 providers have achieved fidelity. In turn, the primary service provider implements the child's early intervention program with the child and family at the frequency and intensity prescribed in the Individualized Family Service Plan. Family coaching supports carry over of intervention strategies into everyday routines such as mealtime, bath time, playtime to help families facilitate generalization across environments.

Results

As of December 2018, 297 children with autism and their families have received Early Start Maine services, with 58 children and families receiving services currently.

Family satisfaction survey results

In August 2015, MAIER implemented the Family Survey. This survey focuses on a family's satisfaction with their child's participation in the Early Start Denver Model. Families have the option of an electronic or paper version of the survey. Survey results are anonymous. For families choosing the paper version of the survey, a SASE is provided for anonymity.

Below is a sample of open-ended responses from the family surveys. See **Table 3** for a complete list of parent/family comments and feedback.

Imported from the electronic survey:

Text Response

This is a wonderful model and was very beneficial to our daughters growth and development. It's almost scary to think about where she would be today if she hadn't been fortunate enough to receive these services. It truly made a difference. I wish nothing but success for this program and all the future kids you will be helping.

My son had many issues with social interaction and with language. In the year I was in the program he made a lot of positive progress now playtime is very enjoyable and he goes to preschool where he has made new friends.

Great model, very helpful

We couldn't be more thankful. Our son has learned so much and we can see just how PROUD he is of himself with these newly acquired skills. We'd love him no matter what, but there's a new joy in his eyes that makes our hearts melt.

I wish our ESDM provider would move to live with us, she made the life soooo easy.

This helped open up my child in so many areas that weren't open to him before and they helped us learn and modify things to help him learn. This is a wonderful program and I'm happy with the results we got from this.

Recommendations/Future Planning

- Increase number of providers with continued fidelity
- Publish results of intervention thus far
- Develop a telehealth option for families to address waitlist

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

V. Community Outreach

V. MAIER Community Outreach

Introduction

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) strives to improve outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) through our outreach efforts both on the University of Maine (UMaine) campus and in communities across Maine. MAIER staff actively seeks and participates in opportunities and activities to develop and foster relationships with families impacted by ASD, share our resources and expertise with the professionals, agencies and organizations that support them, and raise awareness, understanding, and acceptance of those living with the condition.

Progress

From the beginning, MAIER staff has sought opportunities and activities to promote the resources, tools, activities, and expertise available from the Institute. Since launching five years ago, MAIER has become a reliable resource for UMaine students and faculty, developed a strong Family Partnership program (See section on MAIER Family Partnership), become a regular exhibitor at Maine autism conferences and community autism-awareness activities, presented at invited community events and staff trainings, and participated in professional conferences to promote MAIER objectives. In addition, we developed a proactive process for promoting and distributing MAIER resources to both families and the medical and educational professionals working with them. We continue to look to family members, advocates, and professionals to help identify unmet needs and concerns to guide our continued outreach efforts.

Results

Outreach to the UMaine Community has taken many forms to support the educational goals of graduate and undergraduate students while promoting the mission of MAIER. This includes mentoring students with autism-related projects and with the “Autism at UM” club, offering volunteer opportunities at family events, and by being a “client” for communication/journalism students developing their publicity and public relations skills. As future educators, support professionals, journalists, and community members, students benefit from these opportunities with an increased understanding of persons with autism and the associated family impact and experiences while completing their educational goals and requirements.

In the fall of 2017, MAIER staff initiated a collaborative relationship with the UMaine Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in an effort to help support UMaine students with autism. After identifying a need for information and resources from faculty to better understand and support students with ASD in the classroom, MAIER developed an online faculty resource center available on the MAIER

Website: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/supporting-college-students-autism-spectrum/>. A resource for families contemplating college for their child with autism was also added to the *Family Life and Developmental Resource* webpage page:

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/family-developmental/>

MAIER continues to collaborate with SAS for the benefit of the UMaine community by co-hosting an event in the Spring of 2018, presenting an author and father of an adult son with ASD to speak about the experience of raising a child with ASD. In the fall of 2018, MAIER was invited to present at a campus event, “Equity, Access, and Inclusion: A World Usability Day” hosted by SAS, offering information and resources to support UMaine students on the spectrum. See Table 4 for details on these UMaine campus outreach efforts.

Outreach to the Community has taken many forms and reached a variety of communities. MAIER staff participates annually as an exhibitor in the **Southern Maine Autism Conference** in Portland (4 yrs) and the ASM Autism Conference in Orono in 2017 and 2018. MAIER staff also exhibited at several local school level Autism Resource Fairs, a Community Autism Awareness family day in Rockland (2 years), offered a presentation at an Autism Community event hosted by Maine Coast Hospital in Ellsworth, and participated in the 2015 ASM Autism Walk. These events are an opportunity to meet local families, educators, and service providers and spread the word about the work taking place at MAIER as well to raise awareness of the Professional Development and training opportunities, MAIER family partnership and our print and online resources, including the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD*.

MAIER staff further provides outreach through both invited trainings and informal interactions with community members. In a effort to educate staff and support inclusion, MAIER provided a half-day staff training at Maine Discovery Museum (Bangor), presented at a staff meeting at the Belfast YMCA, provided volunteer training prior to our 2018 Adaptive Climbing event for families, and regularly provides information, guidance, and informal support to staff and business owners associated with MAIER’s FP events. In 2017, MAIER collaborated with the MDM to develop a social narrative, “I am going to the Maine Discovery Museum” and other visual supports for children with autism and other sensory and developmental disabilities while visiting the Museum.

(See our website to view a copy:

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/2018/02/02/community-partner-mdm/>.)

Plans for 2019 include collaboration with the Horizons Adaptive Climbing program to develop a social story for their program, and exploring a new relationship with the Some

Theater in Orono to support inclusion at the production level and for future performances.

Since the publication of the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD* in 2014 and the *Road Map to Services* brochure in 2017, MAIER staff works to enhance dissemination of these resources through periodic introductory targeted mailings to developmental and diagnostic clinics and pediatricians, libraries, CDS sites, SPED Directors, and teachers. They are distributed to our MALT teams and made available to attendees at MAIER trainings and MFP events. We regularly deliver quantities to the Autism Society of Maine, the Maine Parent Federation, and other professional offices on request, to support wide distribution of these valuable resources. Since publication, we have delivered more than 3000 copies of the *Parent Guide to ASD* and begin distribution of our newly revised, 2nd edition in the fall of 2018.

Professional Community

Sharing the work and research of MAIER on a national level is a core objective. MAIER faculty and staff have presented at several national conferences to promote the work and research of MAIER, including two of the nation's premier autism conferences, OCALICON and the Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities. Additionally, MAIER staff have presented with the Council for Exceptional Children, the Division of Early Childhood, the American Council on Rural Special Education, and Zero to Three. Please see Table 4 for a list of regional and national presentations.

Outreach to individual families occurs within the MAIER Family Partnership (MFP) program through planned events and direct contact with families via email, phone calls, and at family conferences and events. See the MFP section of this report for details.

Conclusions

MAIER staff actively seeks and fosters partnerships on the UMaine campus, in the local community, and across the state of Maine to strengthen our outreach efforts. We support the learning and educational goals of UMaine students through both formal and informal methods, and provide resources to support faculty with students with ASD. We broaden our impact through community and professional events, conferences, and trainings, as well as through our direct outreach to other organizations, and agencies. Together, these efforts are contributing to greater awareness and understanding, acceptance, and inclusion of individuals with ASD and their families and caregivers.

See **Table 4** for Community Outreach events.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

VI. Resources

VI. MAIER Resources

Introduction

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) serves as the primary source for information and resources to support Maine citizens on the autism spectrum and their families and the professionals that work with them. The Institute develops, publishes, and disseminates new Maine-specific resources to meet the needs of Maine families and identifies and directs both families and professionals to reliable and scientifically sound resources available from other agencies, organizations, and published sources. The MAIER Professional Development Series offers 10-12 workshop opportunities annually to educate and support Maine professionals working with students with autism spectrum disorders. (See “Professional Development” section of this report for comprehensive reporting on this effort.)

Progress

Since launching in 2014, MAIER has worked with professionals and families to identify areas of need for Maine families impacted by ASD in order to respond to those needs. Our first project, *The Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders*, is the first comprehensive handbook of its kind made available free to Maine families and is available in print and online. Since publication, the handbook has become the “go-to” resource for families new to the diagnosis and for those entering a new developmental stage or educational transition.

Over time, MAIER staff developed and published a “Roadmaps to Services” brochure, (specific to Maine laws and services), online resource centers for both families and for professionals, online parent coaching modules, and online professional development workshops and training opportunities. We send our e-newsletter *Pathways*, and periodic e-blasts to our always growing mailing lists of families (MFP Database) and professionals in a professional database. We continue to work with families and professionals to identify unmet needs and work to develop solutions.

Results

Below is a listing and description of resources developed by MAIER and available to Maine families and professionals, with hyperlinks to corresponding online copies or webpages. MAIER staff works to promote and distribute our resources by attending autism and disability-related conferences and events, through direct mailings to collaborating agencies and stakeholders, through announcements in our e-newsletters and e-blasts sent to our Professional and MFP mailing lists, on the MAIER FaceBook page, and via “News” post on the MAIER website. At the time of this report, our mailing

lists included 759 families/community members (MFP Database) and 2079 professionals/educators (Professional Database).

MAIER staff fosters our partnerships with the Autism Society of Maine, the Maine Parent Federation, Developmental Clinics, and other medical and educational agencies and organizations to further the reach of our print resources. Professionals, such as education and early childhood professionals, attending our PD workshops, conferences, and meetings are also directed to our online trainings and resources. Photos and screenshots of our resources are displayed in Appendix C.

[The Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/maine-parent-guide-asd/)

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/maine-parent-guide-asd/>

MAIER staff developed this parent-friendly guide in 2015 with the help of a dedicated group of MAIER Family Partnership (MFP) parents. The goal is to assist families as they navigate the autism journey through the lifespan. The first edition of the *Maine Parent Guide* included three booklets, guiding families from the initial question of “Does my child have autism?” to steps for obtaining needed assessments, connecting with educational and social services, and finding resources based on their needs.

In 2018, the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD*, was reviewed, revised, and updated with the collaboration and expertise drawn from our family partnership, educators and professionals, collaborating agencies, and from individuals on the spectrum. A new volume, “Living with Autism: High School and Adult Life on the Spectrum” was added in the 2nd edition to address the lifespan issues and concerns. Additional new content in the 2nd edition includes personal safety for persons with ASD, Alternative and Augmentative Communication, and Post-secondary education.

The *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders* is enriched with personal stories, reflections, and suggestions from the parent group, lending a personal touch that reflects their experiences and knowledge gained from their own journeys. Family photos capture the joys and challenges of raising a child with ASD, lending an additional personal touch. We are pleased to include narratives and photos from several individuals with ASD in our 2nd edition.

[Road Map to Services](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/wp-content/uploads/sites/150/2017/05/MAIER-BrochureFinal.pdf)

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/wp-content/uploads/sites/150/2017/05/MAIER-BrochureFinal.pdf>

This comprehensive, yet concise, and colorful brochure provides guidance to families

who are questioning if their child is showing signs of ASD and provides a roadmap to assessments and services in Maine. “Road Map to Services” provides information on the early signs of autism in the areas of communication, social skills, and restrictive or repetitive interests as early as 12-18 months. In addition, it offers guidance to obtaining necessary assessments and to connecting with related services and supports available in Maine. For parents who are concerned about their child’s development, this brochure can provide that important guidance toward obtaining the help and early intervention that will support their child’s development. This brochure is being made available directly from MAIER, our collaborating agencies, and several Maine developmental clinics and pediatrician offices.

[Pathways](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/pathways/) (e-newsletter, also available online) and e-blasts
<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/pathways/>

Pathways, the e-newsletter of MAIER is published 1-2x per year and sent via email to individuals in our Professional and MFP Databases to alert them to MAIER and autism-related news & events, trainings, new resources, and other items of interest. E-blasts are sent 6-8 times per year or more, with timely announcements and reminders directed specifically to professionals and/or families.

[Family Resource Center](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/) (online resource)
<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/>

Family-friendly and reliable resources listings for individuals and families living in Maine, including both Maine –based and National and Federal agencies and organizations that can provide assistance. In addition, electronic copies of MAIER’s *Maine Parent Guides to Autism Spectrum Disorders* and *Road Map to Services* are available to download as PDFs. This section is divided into three content areas for easier navigation:

- Maine Resources
- Family Life and Developmental Resources
- National and Federal Resources

[Places and Spaces Project](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/places-and-spaces/) (online resource)
<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/places-and-spaces/>

This resource emerged from a desire expressed by MFP parents to have a place to share information about safe, welcoming, accepting, and fun recreational places and events around the state using an online forum. Initiated by MAIER staff and a small group of interested parents, the goal is to build an active and supportive online environment for families to share their activities and experiences and give others the

confidence to try new places for family fun. MAIER staff actively seeks new submissions for the project through our newsletters, e-blasts, and face-to-face and online interactions with families.

This online forum includes:

- Places and Spaces Directory
- Link to MAIER's Community Events Calendar
- Tip Sheet "*Visiting New Places and Spaces,*"
- Community Tip Sheet (*in development*)
- Links to additional resources related to exploring new places when you have a family member with ASD
- Submission forms for visitors to suggest Directory listings
- Submission forms for Community Events for MAIER's Event Calendar.

The Directory itself is organized by subcategories to make navigation easier:

- Amusement & Water Parks
- Libraries
- Museums
- Playgrounds
- State and National Parks
- Trails & Preserves
- Zoos, Animals, & Aquariums
- Other

A secondary goal for this project is to educate communities to better welcome and include families of all abilities in their places and spaces around Maine. Our hope is to create communities that understand the typical challenges for families impacted by ASD, consider accommodations that may be helpful, and share in the joys of successful family outings and activities. This online resource is currently being developed, with plans to include short educational and parent videos to support community inclusion.

[Parent Coaching Modules](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/parent-coaching-modules/) (*online resource*)

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/parent-coaching-modules/>

Parent Coaching Modules are designed to guide parents and caregivers in encouraging positive emotions and happy interactions with their children in a manner that promotes learning. Parent coaching modules are based on the principles of the Early Start Denver Model, an evidence-based practice for young children with ASD. Currently, five modules are available with information, videos, resources, and activities to guide caregivers to help their children achieve important learning goals such as language, play skills, and

positive social relationships in a step-by step manner. Modules build upon one another and do not require special equipment as they take advantage of toys and play materials readily available in most homes. Modules can be utilized independently by caregivers, but are also used by families enrolled in ESM program with the guidance of ESM providers.

[Professional Resource and Research Center](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/) *(online resource)*

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/>

Descriptions and hyperlinks to reliable, scientifically-supported state and national resources for professional development, training, and research to support students on the autism spectrum. Includes national autism resource centers, and sources for learning modules on evidence-based practices for students with ASD. In 2018, a new webpage, “ Supporting College Students on the Autism Spectrum,” was developed in response to discussions with parents of UMaine students with ASD, UMaine disability support services staff, and UMaine faculty.

[Professional Development Workshop Archives](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/trainings/2016-17-professional-development-series/) *(online resource)*

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/trainings/2016-17-professional-development-series/>

Nine day-long workshops presented as the 2016-17 Professional Development Series are available to view free online by interested professionals, educators, students, family members, and community members. This archived viewing option allows professionals to gain training in evidence-based practices for supporting students with ASD at a time convenient with their schedule. Families and community members can learn more about scientifically-supported treatments from autism experts and professionals.

[“First Steps” Early Start Denver Model \(ESDM\) Training for professionals](https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/about-us/early-start-maine/first-steps-training/) *(online resource)*

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/about-us/early-start-maine/first-steps-training/>

First Steps training for Early Start Maine, using the ESDM, is MAIER’s online training developed to build the capacity of Primary Service Providers (PSP) to implement ESDM through Child Development Services (CDS). The First Steps online training is a guided self-study that requires readings and activities, submission of reflections to a MAIER ESDM instructor, and a one-day in-person fidelity training. The content of this training provides participants with a strong understanding and foundation to support practice in ESDM and is the first step to become an ESDM provider in the Early Start Maine program.

(Note: These webpages are available only with permission of participants' supervisor and MAIER staff.)

Recommendations

- Develop and complete “Community Tips” section of Places & Spaces project. To include short informational videos and handouts on autism, how to make your space/place/staff more welcome and accommodating for families, staff resources, visual supports, etc.
- Add additional Parent Coaching Modules

Conclusion

Over the course of these five years, MAIER has become an important source for reliable, evidence supported information and resources. We promote and distribute our resources through newsletters and e-blasts, by attending local and regional conferences and workshops, and through our relationships with the Maine Department of Education, the Autism Society of Maine, the Maine Parent Federation, Child Development Services, Developmental Clinics and pediatrician offices, and local schools and professionals. Our website traffic increases annually, as new resources and information are added in response to needs expressed by our stakeholders.

See **Appendix C** for MAIER examples of resources.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

VII. Collaborations

VII. Collaborations

Introduction

Organizations such as the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) grow stronger and further our impact through our collaborations with others seeking similar goals and with comparable organizational missions. MAIER staff actively seeks and fosters collaborations with like-minded persons, agencies, and organizations to host educational and social events, offer resources to families, professionals, and the community, and to support inclusion efforts being made in Maine communities.

Progress

From the beginning, MAIER staff worked to identify unmet needs and collaborate with the autism community to address these needs. Since 2014, we developed strong community partnerships with professionals, experts, agencies and organizations serving families impacted by ASD. These relationships enhance our efforts, and promote activities, resources, and opportunities that were less likely to occur in the absence of these collaborations.

Results

The following is a listing of MAIER's collaborative efforts in support of our shared goals and objectives. For more information on family-centered events, see the *Maine Family Partnership* section of this report.

Maine Discovery Museum (Bangor): MAIER has developed a strong community partnership with the Maine Discovery Museum (MDM) in support of their "My Day to Play" programming for children on the autism spectrum. Since 2014, MAIER has partnered with the MDM to host 1-2 special events each year during "My Day to Play." MAIER staff hosting these special events offer autism resources and invite educational speakers and fire/safety officers for the families attending. Annually, we host a "Santa's Village" in December, offering a visit and photo with MAIER's "Sensitive Santa." This ongoing relationship with the MDM led to formal autism training for their staff in 2017, the addition of visual supports throughout the Museum, and the creation of a social narrative, "I am going to the Maine Discovery Museum" to support individuals with autism before and during their visits.

YMCA (Auburn/Lewiston and Waldo County): In support of our shared missions to support inclusion of all individuals, MAIER partnered with the YMCA teams in Auburn/Lewiston and Belfast for special events at their facilities to welcome and include families impacted by autism. These recreational events served multiple purposes: family recreation in a safe, understanding and accepting environment with accommodations

for their child with ASD, educational components offered by MAIER, and the opportunity to connect with other families sharing similar experiences. During the planning and execution of these events, MAIER staff provided the YMCA staff with formal and informal education and support to enhance their efforts to accommodate and include families impacted by ASD both during these special events and on an ongoing basis at their facilities.

Adaptive Outdoor Education Center (AOEC), Carrabassett Valley & Maine Bound Adventure Center (UM)

In an effort to promote the newly initiated adaptive climbing program for persons with disabilities on the UMaine campus, MAIER co-hosted a MFP family climbing event in the fall of 2018. While introducing MFP families to this local recreational option, it was also an opportunity to promote the AOEC facilities and their wide range of recreational offerings for persons with physical and developmental disabilities. As part of this event collaboration, MAIER staff provided an autism/inclusion training for volunteer support staff prior to the event. Furthermore, MAIER staff will collaborate with AOEC to provide autism training to their incoming volunteers for the 2018-19 “Horizons” winter ski program at Sugarloaf for children with ASD (see: <https://www.adaptiveoutdooreducationcenter.org/skiing>).

Student Accessibility Services (SAS), University of Maine

This partnership was initiated in the fall of 2017, in an effort to support students with autism on the UM campus through collaborative efforts. After identifying a need for information and guidance among faculty teaching students with ASD on campus, MAIER staff created on resource page “Supporting College Students on the Autism Spectrum” (<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/supporting-college-students-autism-spectrum/>) to support the success of potential and current students with ASD on the UMaine campuses through faculty and staff awareness and education.

In April 2018, MAIER co-hosted a community event with SAS on the UM campus presenting Derek Volk, the *Author of “Chasing the Rabbit”* and father of an adult son with ASD, to speak with UM and local community members. In November 2018, MAIER graduate student Brooklin Jones with faculty Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis and Sarah Howorth presented an overview of MAIER’s multifaceted approach to inclusion and evidence-based practices at the Student Accessibility Services daylong event on the UM campus “*Equity, Access, and Inclusion: A World Usability Day.*”

Autism Society of Maine

As the foremost agency for family education, support, and advocacy for persons with

autism in the state of Maine, we recognized the importance of fostering a partnership with ASM from the beginning. MAIER supported ASM in their fundraising efforts by organizing an MFP team for their autism walkathon, and we exhibit annually at their fall Autism conference in Orono. The ASM distributes MAIER's *Maine Parent Guide to ASD* to many new families each year, and ASM staff assisted with the review and revisions of our second edition in 2018.

Maine Parent Federation

Staff of the MPF collaborated in our outreach efforts by providing an educational speaker to one of our first MFP events and regularly distributes the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD* to families in contact with them. In addition, the Director was part of the team of reviewers for the second edition of the *Parent Guide* in 2018.

York Wild Kingdom, York Maine

Through the generosity of YWK's General Manager, Amy Wheeler, MAIER has hosted MFP "Our Day to Play at YWK" in the fall of 2016 and 2018, when the park is less crowded. These daylong events provided families impacted by ASD free admission to the Zoo and Amusement Park, a picnic lunch provided by York Hospital and served by a local BSA Troop. YWK management provided their picnic area as safe space for families to enjoy lunch together and connect with other Maine families. This collaboration allowed families to engage in new experiences in a safe and non-judgmental space for the day. An event of this size and capacity would not be possible without the generosity, compassion, and acceptance of the YWK management and team.

Connor Archer, Founder of Courageous Steps, Self-Advocate

As a young adult on the autism spectrum and Founder of the non-profit "Courageous Steps," Connor is an asset to MAIER on many levels. As part of our collaboration, he has presented his story, his insights, and information about the important work of Courageous Steps to the UMaine Autism Student Club and to families attending two MAIER family events. These collaborations serve as an opportunity for Connor to promote his non-profit, while MAIER families benefit from envisioning new possibilities for their children. At least one MFP family has become involved with the Courageous Steps organization themselves. UMaine students who will likely work with individuals and families impacted by ASD received valuable insights from an individual with ASD. Connor also serves on the MAIER Advisory Council and is a contributor to the 2018 revised edition of the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD*.

Matt Brown, Founder, Autism Safety, Education, and Training (ASET)
Retired Federal Law Enforcement Officer and parent of adult with autism.

Our partnership with Matt Brown centers around the shared concern for the safety of individuals on the autism spectrum. Matt's expertise in wandering issues and fire and home safety has been an asset to MAIER's outreach to families impacted by ASD. Matt has been a presenter at a MAIER PD workshop, an invited speaker at a MFP family event, and has provided safety handouts MAIER routinely includes in our parent packets at family events. Matt contributed valuable autism safety information for the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD* and is an enthusiastic resource for MAIER staff on issues related to fire and home safety, wandering, and the interactions of individuals with autism and first responders.

Karen Grotton-Pelletier, LCPC, Certified radKIDS® Instructor, Parent of child on the spectrum

As a parent of a child with an autism spectrum disorder, Karen has played a role in the development of both editions of the *Maine Parent Guide to ASD*. Sharing her knowledge, expertise, and concern for personal safety for individuals on the autism spectrum, Karen provided content based the radKids® Safety Education program for our second edition of the Parent Guide and continues to be a safety education resource for MAIER.

Conclusions

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research benefits richly from the collaborative relationships we have established with both individuals and organizations since our founding in 2014. With a shared goal of improving the experiences and quality of life for persons with ASD and their families, we each draw on our unique expertise and resources for projects, events, professional development, and activities that might otherwise not come to fruition. Together, with these dedicated individuals, and others who we join in the future, we can strengthen our capacity to improve outcomes for persons and families impacted by autism.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

VIII. Website

VIII. MAIER Website

Introduction

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) hosts an active website to serve as a portal for information and resources serving professionals who work with individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), for families impacted by ASD, and for interested community members. MAIER staff frequently updates the website content with new information, announcements, and resources, as well as creating new content areas to meet the needs of the professionals and communities we serve.

Progress

The MAIER website has grown and evolved since its creation in 2014 in response to the needs of families and professionals across the state. Initially, the webpages highlighted the Mission and Philosophy of the Institute, and listed Professional Development (PD) offerings and registration information. Over time, we added online professional training (PD Workshop Video Archives and the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) First Steps Training module), and resources for evidence-based practices and for supporting college students on the autism spectrum. Additionally, the website offers parent coaching modules based on the ESDM principles, to be utilized independently by parents and caregivers or with support from their ESM providers. These online modules are designed to encourage positive emotions and happy interactions with their children in a manner that promotes learning.

In addition, the MAIER website hosts both community and professional event calendars, information and links to online state and national autism-related research and resources for both professionals and families, and downloadable versions of MAIER's publications, the *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders* and the *Roadmap to Services* brochure. As MAIER's Family Partnership (MFP) grew, the supporting webpages evolved into a reliable resource for families to learn about news and events of interest to families, access to reliable and evidence-based family and developmental resources, guidance in supporting and promoting community inclusion, and opportunities to participate in MFP projects and events.

Results

Overall, the number of visitors to the MAIER website has steadily increased over the years, with news and information, new content, and resources added on a regular basis. In addition, it has become a reliable source of information, event and PD opportunities, and tools for education and early childhood professionals to receive training in evidence-based practices and interventions to support their students with autism and for guiding families of young children with, or at risk for, ASD.

Since launching in 2014, the most visited pages, in addition to MAIER's homepage, include the *Professional Development* homepage, *Event Calendar*, *Family Resources* homepage, *Parent Coaching Modules*, *Maine Family Partnership* homepage, *About Us*, and *Graduate Certificate in ASD*. Readership of MAIER's newsletter, *Pathways*, (also sent by direct e-blast upon publication) also continues to grow as our database of professionals and family members increases annually. Below is a description of MAIER's website content and activity of the major pages.

Recommendations

- Increase web usage by families and professionals with more frequent e-blasts that include relevant and applicable content
- Increase distribution of *Pathways* 2x/yr with links to website content and resources

Conclusion

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research website connects us to families and professionals across Maine.

See **Table 5** for MAIER website statistics and examples.

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

IX. Tables

Table 1
MAIER Family Partnership Projects and Resources

	Date	Description	Impact
<i>Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders</i>	Fall 2015 (1st Edition)	Parent-friendly guide developed in partnership with a dedicated group of MFP parents and professionals. Designed to assist families as they navigate the autism journey in the state of Maine. In three booklets (1st edition) and four booklets (2nd edition), the <i>Parent Guide</i> leads families from the initial question of “Does my child have autism?” to steps for obtaining needed assessments, connecting with educational and social services, and finding resources based on their needs.	<p>Provided MFP parents and interested professionals with the opportunity to share their voices, insights, expertise, and time in shaping an important resource for Maine families like themselves.</p> <p>Handbooks distributed to families, agencies, professionals, educators, organizations, non-profits, & businesses throughout Maine.</p> <p>Distributed by direct delivery and targeted mailings.</p>
	2018 (2nd edition)	<p>The 2nd edition added new content to address the needs of adults on the spectrum, personal safety, and augmentative and alternative communication.</p> <p>The <i>Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders</i> is enriched with personal stories, reflections, and suggestions from the parent group, lending a personal touch that reflects their experiences and knowledge gained from their own journeys. Family photos capture the joys and challenges of raising a child with ASD.</p> <p>Available online as a downloadable PDF w/ hyperlinks: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Autism events and conferences ● MAIER PD events ● Direct request ● SPED directors and educators ● School-based professionals and paraprofessionals ● YMCAs ● Public Libraries ● Developmental Clinics and Pediatric Offices ● Child Development Sites sites ● Early care agencies and preschools ● Autism support agencies (ASM, MPF) <p>Handbooks delivered Fall 2015: 428</p>

		partnership/maine-parent-guide-asd/	Spring 2016: 408 FY 2016-17: 1285 FY 2017- 18 (through July 2018): 964 <i>Note: Numbers likely to be higher as additional copies are distributed incidentally.</i>
Online Family Resources	2014 - current	Homepage created in 2014 as “Resources;” major revisions Fall 2016 (new subpages- see below)	# page views (# unique page views)
<i>Family Resource Homepage:</i> https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/		Homepage for family resources, with topical categories for easy navigation.	2014: 273 (199) 2015: 1,112 (779) 2016: 1,009 (781) 2017: 1,018 (722) 2018 (Jan through Oct.): 683 (479)
Subpages: Maine Parent Guide to ASD		Online version of Parent Guide, downloadable as PDF w hyperlinks (Created February 2016)	2016: 64 (47) 2017: 93 (73) 2018 (Jan through Oct.):134 (97)
Maine Resource Directory		Links to Maine agencies, service providers and related non-profits.(Created October 2016)	2016: 86 2017: 238 (99) 2018 (Jan through Oct.): 136 (61)
Family Life and Developmenta		Links to toolkits and guides useful for family and developmental issues (i.e., Sleep concerns, puberty, bullying) (Created October 2017)	2017: 59 (46) 2018 (Jan through Oct.): 70 (55)
		Links to reliable, evidence- supported resources available from National agencies, organizations	2016: 20 (18)

<p>I Resources</p> <p>National and Federal Family Resources</p> <p>Community Calendar: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/events/category/community-events/</p>		<p>and institutions.(Created October 2016)</p> <p>Announcements of upcoming events for families affected by autism, both MAIER and state-wide, (i.e., Sensory-friendly theater showings, MDM events, social groups, library events for children with ASD, etc.) (Created 2015)</p>	<p>2017: 58 (47) 2018 (Jan through Oct.): 39 (33)</p> <p>2015: 87 (60) 2016: 178 (152) 2017: 176 (139) 2018 (Jan through Oct.):117 (84)</p>
<p><i>Places and Spaces Project:</i></p> <p>https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/places-and-spaces/</p>	<p>June 2017</p>	<p>Ongoing project in partnership with MFP parents.</p> <p>Outgrowth of discussions with MFP parents identifying a need and desire to have a place for families to share information about safe, welcoming, accepting, and fun recreational places and events around the state.</p> <p>Dedicated to helping families discover some new options for recreation and fun, or rediscover forgotten ones.</p> <p>Directory listings compiled through submissions and suggestions from MAIER staff, MFP families, and friends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amusement/Water Parks ● Libraries 	<p>Opportunity for MFP parent work group to share their talents in developing a new resource for families like their own.</p> <p>Opportunity for families, professionals and others to share information and suggestions of recreational places and events via directory and calendar submissions</p> <p>Event calendar lists special events and activities for families impacted by ASD across Maine</p> <p>Service learning opportunity for UM Graduate student</p> <p>Web visits: 2017: 130 (99)</p>

<p>Directory https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/places-and-spaces/)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Museums ● Playgrounds ● State/National Parks ● Trails/Preserves ● Zoos/Animals/Aquariums ● Other Places & Spaces <p>Tips for helping families with children with ASD explore new places</p> <p>Planned growth: Tips and tools (i.e., educational videos) for community partners to support awareness, inclusion, and acceptance of families that include an individual with ASD.</p>	<p>2018 (Jan through Oct.): 125 (84)</p>
MFP Outreach	Date	Description	Impact
<p><i>Aroostook County Autism Family Fair</i></p>	<p>2016</p>	<p>Information table, networking w local families and with Aroostook Autism Support Group</p>	<p>Increased awareness of MAIER mission, resources, and work and develop connections with local families</p> <p>54 Maine Parent Guides distributed</p>
<p><i>MFP e-blasts</i></p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>Bi-monthly email sent to MFP mailing list: news of interest to families, announcements of MFP events, new resources, etc.</p>	<p>Distributed to families on our mailing list via email (as of October 2018, 731 individuals and families)</p>
<p><i>Rockland Autism Awareness Family Fun Day</i></p>	<p>April 2017 April 2018</p>	<p>Information table, networking w families, support fundraising for local autism group</p>	<p>Increased awareness of MAIER mission, resources, and work and develop connections with local families.</p> <p>Maine Parent Guide to ASD distributed: 2017: 10</p>

			2018: 21 Service Learning opportunity for UM Graduate student (2017)
<i>Pathways Newsletter: Family Focus Section</i> Available online at https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/pathways/	Fall 2018 Fall 2017 Fall 2016 October 2015 April 2015	Regular feature of MAIER's <i>Pathways Newsletter</i> includes family stories, event announcements, useful resources, and links to items of interest to families. Emailed to families and professionals on our mailing list. For those without email access, a print copy is mailed on request.	Distributed to families on our mailing list (as of October 2018, 731 individuals and families)
MFP Events	Date	Description	Impact
Overview of MFP Events	Ongoing	MAIER Family Partnership hosts educational and social events to offer families reliable, scientifically supported information and resources, strengthen community ties, and encourage family-to-family networking and support. With the support of MAIER funding and community businesses and partners, MFP events are always FREE to families attending. Goals include educational, recreational, support/resource, and family-to-family connection. Refreshments and opportunities to meet other	Relationship building with families across the state of Maine Families receive reliable, evidence-base resources directly from MAIER, including a copy of the <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i> . Families receive Information and resources from invited speakers and visitors. Family recreation and connections with other families in a safe, sensory-friendly, and accepting environment.

		families who may face similar challenges.	Strengthens relationships with MFP parent volunteers. Volunteer opportunities for UM students
<i>Overview of Events at Maine Discovery Museum, Bangor</i>	2014-2018	MFP partnership with MDM for special “My Day to Play” events. Museum is closed to other visitors and special accommodations to make “sensory friendly” environment for children with ASD. MAIER information table and staff connections. Support/Autism education provided to MDM staff	6 Events held since 2014 in partnership with MDM Informal consultation, education, and support to MDM staff in support of their twice monthly “My Day to Play” events for families impacted by ASD. Formal, half-day staff training by MAIER staff. Developed and delivered social narrative “I am going to the Maine Discovery Museum” as a PDF for MDM use with patrons and posted on their website. https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/wp-content/uploads/sites/150/2018/02/MDM-Social-Narrative-Final.pdf
<i>“My Day to Play”</i>	December 2014	Invited speaker, Ann Long, from MPF presented: “Advocacy for your child with ASD” Visit and photo with “Sensitive” Santa (MFP parent volunteer Santa and photographer)	35 families attended Take-home information from MAIER and invited speaker

<p><i>My Day to Play at MDM: Autism Safety Education Event</i></p>	<p>March 2015</p>	<p>Focus on Safety Issues for families impacted by ASD.</p> <p>Invited speaker: Matt Brown (Autism Safety Education & Training) presented: “Family Safety”</p> <p>Fire safety education offered: Guest firefighters & police officer interacted with children, demonstrated fire safety, fire and police equipment, and established positive relationships.</p>	<p>25 families attended</p> <p>Take-home information from MAIER and invited speaker</p> <p>Take-home safety handouts and coloring pages from MFP.</p>
<p><i>My Day to Play at MDM: Santa’s Village</i></p>	<p>December 2015</p>	<p>Visit with “Sensitive” Santa (MFP parent volunteer); free digital photo with Santa provided to families.</p> <p>Children received gift book of their choice (donated from UM Literacy Dept.)</p>	<p>24 families attended and received newly published copies of the <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i>.</p> <p>Families received digital photo with Santa and gift of book.</p>
<p><i>Holiday Celebration at MDM</i></p>	<p>December 2016</p>	<p>Visit with “Sensitive” Santa (MFP parent volunteer) at Santa’s Village, book gift.</p> <p>Invited Guests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local police officer/parent of child with ASD offered information on elopement issues and the local “Wandering Database” registration process. ● Connor Archer, founder of “Courageous Steps,” and young adult with ASD, met with families and 	<p>18 families attended and received the Maine Parent Guide to ASD and additional resources.</p> <p>Families received Fire Safety coloring sheets and “Holiday Tips for Families of Children with ASD” handout.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunity for UM graduate and undergraduate students</p>

		shared information about his non-profit.	
<p>“Visit to Santa’s Village” at MDM: Holiday event at MDM</p>	<p>December 2017</p>	<p>Visit with “Sensitive” Santa and his elves at “Santa’s Village” and digital photo courtesy of MFP parent volunteers.</p> <p>Children received gift bags and hardcover copy of “The Polar Express.”</p>	<p>32 families attended and received MAIER information, including <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i>.</p> <p>Families received Fire Safety coloring sheets and “Holiday Tips for Families of Children with ASD” handout. Volunteer opportunity for UM graduate and undergraduate students</p>
<p>“Visit to Santa’s Village” at MDM: Holiday event at MDM</p>	<p>December 2018</p>	<p>Visit with “Sensitive” Santa and his support elves at “Santa’s Village” - a room decorated for the holiday and sensory accommodations.</p> <p>Holiday Crafts led by Volunteer UM Education students.</p> <p>Children received gift bags and hardcover copy of a Jan Brett Holiday book (older children could choose among chapter books, or non-fiction science books.</p>	<p>55 families registered to attend, however, due to inclement winter weather, the final attendance was 30+ families.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunity for UM graduate and undergraduate students</p> <p>Families received newly published 2nd Edition of <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i>, and other resources including handouts “ Fire Safety for children with autism” and “Holiday Tips for Families of Children with ASD.”</p> <p>Family networking and shared positive experience.</p>

<p>2015 <i>MFP Team Autism Walk</i></p>	<p>April 2015</p>	<p>Local families and MAIER staff joined to walk in Annual Autism Walk in Bangor and raise money for the ASM.</p>	<p>Opportunity for family-to-family support and development of MFP relationships.</p> <p>\$770 raised for ASM, opportunity for family support & connections</p>
<p>2016 <i>Kiddos Indoor Playground Play Day</i></p>	<p>March 2016</p>	<p>Playtime for local families at a time when closed to other customers and attention to being “sensory-friendly.”</p> <p>Established MFP connections with local families, support family-to-family connections.</p>	<p>8 families attended, fostered family-to-family connections.</p> <p>Received MAIER Parent Guide to ASD and other MAIER resources.</p>
<p>2016 & 2018 <i>“Our Day to Play” at York’s Wild Kingdom</i></p>	<p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2018</p>	<p>Day-long FREE recreational fun at YWK for families impacted by autism: event led by a local MFP parent and MAIER staff.</p> <p>In partnership with YWK (provided free admissions to attendees) and York Hospital (provided picnic lunch)</p> <p>Free morning refreshments and lunch at picnic area (closed to other visitors) to promote family-to-family connections.</p> <p>(2017) Offered ID a Kid: Complimentary Child ID kit</p>	<p>2016: 70 families attended 2018: 85 families attended Received Maine Parent Guide to ASD & other resource information</p> <p>Positive relationship development with YWK staff and management- supporting increased awareness and acceptance.</p> <p>Raised awareness of MAIER and ASD in local community</p> <p>Child ID Kits created for many families</p>

		<p>from Prudential/local PD to families (MFP parent volunteer)</p> <p>Relationship development with local businesses in support of the event.</p> <p>(2016) Sixteen volunteers from Camp CARD NE (Summer Life Skills camp for teens with Autism) and their support staff and camp Director served lunch to families attending.</p> <p>(2018) Seventeen BSA and their scout leaders served lunch and positive interactions with families.</p>	<p>attending (2017)</p> <p>Volunteer experience for UM students, students from Camp CARD NE (2017) and local BSA Troop (2018)</p>
<p>2017 <i>Swim & Gym at Waldo County YMCA</i></p>	<p>April 2017</p>	<p>Family event in YMCA spaces dedicated to the group to enable sensory- friendly environment and family-to-family connections.</p> <p>Family pool time in pool closed to other visitors</p> <p>Gym space with guided play activities</p> <p>Sensory activities, snacks, and MFP info and resources in space dedicated to the event for sensory-friendliness.</p> <p>Fire Truck visit from local Fire Department</p>	<p>9 local families attended and received <i>Maine Parent Guides to ASD</i> and Autism focused fire safety handouts.</p> <p>YMCA Staff education: MAIER staff invited to present on autism at staff meeting prior to event.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunity for 8 UM students</p> <p>Fire Safety awareness materials provided to families</p>
<p>2017 & 2018 <i>Outdoor</i></p>	<p>June 2017 June 2018</p>	<p>Partnership with the AL YMCA to host an outdoor recreation day for local families impacted by ASD.</p> <p>Guided outdoor activities: Archery, Obstacle</p>	<p>Families received MAIER information and resources, including the <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i>.</p> <p>2017: 20 families attended 2018: 19 families attended</p>

<p><i>Adventure Day with Auburn Lewiston YMCA</i></p>		<p>Course, Low Ropes Course, Nature Scavenger Hunt, Bubble Fun, Volleyball, hiking</p> <p>Family BBQ, ice cream, and refreshments throughout day.</p> <p>Fire Truck visit from local Fire Department</p> <p>2017: ID a Kid Complimentary Child ID kit from Prudential/local PD to families (MFP parent volunteer)</p>	<p>Fun outdoor recreational activity and adventures for families; several noted their children were experiencing these activities for “the first time.”</p> <p>Raised awareness of MAIER and ASD in local community through solicitation for financial support.</p> <p>Most families opted to make Child ID Kit to take home. (2017)</p> <p>Positive relationship development with Director and staff at AL YMCA, supporting increased awareness and acceptance.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunity for UM students</p>
<p>2018 <i>Sensory-friendly movie showing at Spotlight Cinemas in Orono, ME</i></p>	<p>January 2018</p>	<p>Partnership with Spotlight Cinema in Orono for FREE “Sensory-Friendly” showing of “Paddington 2”</p> <p>Children received free snacks, MAIER backpack with sensory surprises.</p> <p>MAIER information table and staff connections.</p>	<p>25 families attended and received MAIER information, including <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i>.</p>

<p>2018 <i>Pizza Party at Pat's (Elsworth)</i></p>	<p>May 2018</p>	<p>Free pizza party in private space with support for family-to-family introductions, connections, & support.</p> <p>Dr. Seuss inspired children's activities led by UM Doctoral student</p> <p>Visit from local Fire Department ladder truck</p>	<p>10 families attended, received MAIER resources, including <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i> and fire safety handouts.</p> <p>Fostered family to family connections</p>
<p><i>Adaptive Climbing Event at UM</i></p>	<p>November 18, 2018</p>	<p>Partnership with Maine Bound Adventure Center (UM) and the Adaptive Outdoor Education Center (Carrabassett Valley) for indoor climbing event</p> <p>Presentation to staff and volunteers prior to event (autism awareness & expectations, accommodations, etc.)</p> <p>Free family event to explore indoor climbing with volunteers and staff trained to support individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities.</p> <p>Opportunity for UM student volunteer and community service</p>	<p>12 families attended, received MAIER resources, including <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i> and fire safety handouts.</p> <p>Volunteer and service learning opportunity for seven UM education students</p> <p>Fostered family to family connections</p> <p>Positive family experiences summed up by one mother: "That was such an awesome, supportive environment today. It's an activity we never would have tried because of all the unknowns (Would he like it? Would he try it? How would we weather all the stares from a meltdown and negative talk?) We didn't have to sweat any of that today, everyone there was wonderful and we got to try something new as a family."</p>
<p>Upcoming Events</p>			
<p><i>Sensory Sensitive</i></p>	<p>Feb/March 2018</p>	<p>See previous year Movie Showing event</p>	

<p><i>Movie showing at Spotlight Cinemas in Orono</i></p>			
<p><i>Parent/ Caregiver Workshop: Sexuality and Relationships for your child with ASD with Victoria Slocum, Ph.D.</i></p>	<p>April 11, 2018</p>	<p>Free 2-hour workshop to be offered in the evening for parents and caregivers by expert on relationships and sexuality education for persons with autism and developmental disabilities.</p>	
<p><i>Collaborative Event with the Autism Society of Maine: Documentary Showing of "Extraordinary People" with panel discussion</i></p>	<p>April 2, 2018</p>	<p>Partnering with ASM to offer free showing to the UM and greater Orono community.</p> <p>Panel discussion post viewing to discuss, debrief, and further inform community regarding the content and experience of the movie showing.</p>	
<p>On the Horizon for 2019</p>			
		<p>Outdoor Adventure Day or Pool Party with Auburn/Lewiston YMCA (Summer)</p>	

		<p>Collaboration with Some Theater Co to offer a special showing of “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night” for families impacted by ASD.</p> <p>Annual “Santa’s Village” at MDM (December)</p> <p>Collaborative Outdoor event with the Adaptive Outdoor Education Center in Carrabassett Valley</p>	
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Abbreviations:

ASM: Autism Society of Maine

PD: Professional Development

MDM: Maine Discovery Museum (Bangor)

MFP: MAIER Family Partnership

MPF: Maine Parent Federation

Table 2
MAIER Professional Development
2014-2018

Date	Title	Speaker	Workshop Description	# attendees
2014-15 Academic Year				
September	Functional Behavior	James Artesani,	With the emergence of inclusive educational	59

<p>12, 2014</p>	<p>(Part 1 of a 3-part Series)</p>	<p>Ed.D. University of Maine</p>	<p>practices, addressing challenging student behaviors that are sometimes exhibited by students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in school settings has increasingly become the responsibility of all educators. Function-Based Thinking (FBT) is a process for thinking systematically about behavior, the environment in which it occurs, and developing interventions that match the function of the behavior.</p> <p>FBA has proven to be among the most effective methods of assessing challenging behavior in school settings. However, more severe forms of challenging behavior typically require a comprehensive FBA process, which can be time consuming and require a level of behavioral expertise that is not in the toolbox of most educators. Over the past decade, briefer forms of FBA have emerged, which has resulted in more time-efficient methods for assessing less severe, but persistent student behavior. Whether comprehensive or brief, the process involved in FBA is based on the same empirically verified behavioral principles. While it is not realistic to expect every educator to be an “expert” in behavioral assessment and intervention, briefer forms of FBA have made the core elements of this proven process available to a wider range of school-based personnel. In recent years, FBT has emerged as a promising approach for helping general education teachers assess the environmental factors that contribute to challenging behaviors, as well as the function such behavior serves for the</p>	
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			individual student being assessed. Further, FBT allows educators to systematically problem-solve solutions for less severe, but ongoing behaviors, which interfere with academic achievement and social/behavioral growth.	
October 1, 2014	Challenging Behaviors	Dr. Cathy Pratt, Indiana Resource Center for ASD	Having a child on the autism spectrum who engages in problematic behaviors, places a tremendous stress on families. This one day workshop will examine the potential underlying conditions surrounding behaviors, and strategies for addressing challenging behaviors that both help in the moment and that can lead to long term change.	52
October 6, 2014	Tracking Progress: Tools to Guide Academic and Behavioral Success	Jill Conley, BCaBA, RSU 26	This workshop will dive into the world of behavioral and academic data tracking. To get there, we'll be looking at real life scenarios, working together as small groups, trying out some data tracking tools, role playing and participating in other hands-on activities that will highlight the material being presented. There will also be time to talk about what to do once the data have been collected. All too often, we find ourselves up to our ears in data and tend to forget just how important it is to the success of our students. Join me as we dig deeper into the importance of tracking student progress and the impact this tracking can have on student success!	30
October 10, 2014	ASD and Evidence-based Practice: Connecting Research to Practice	Courtney Pacholski, M.S., BCBA, University of Maine Jamie Treworgy, BCBA	Positive behavior support plans (PBSP) that are valid and ecologically sound are created from functional behavior assessments and data collection. Formats for PBSP can range from lengthy documents outlining multiple procedures, checklists with	21

			recommended interventions, safety and crisis response plans, and basic outlines for supports. This training will identify barriers to implementing PBPS with fidelity and spend time problem solving using scenarios from their own students. Participants will be able to distinguish between environmental and staff supports, teaching procedures to address skill deficits, outline reinforcement and consequence systems, and create and leave with an easy to read/easy to implement one page PBSP appropriate for use in school-wide contexts.	
October 16, 2014	Early Intervention and Autism	Bethan Jerome M.Ed., Catherine Bohls M.Ed., Debra Rainey, M.Ed., and Susane Boulette, M.Ed.	This Professional Development opportunity will provide participants with information on current research findings at both the national and state levels. The findings will inform the discussion as the presenters focus on the use of evidence-based practices to support young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Developmentally appropriate framework and current best practice guidelines for early childhood special education will also guide the information and strategies provided to participants.	37
October 20, 2104	Social Narratives and Beyond: Communication, Behavior, and ASD	Elizabeth Field, M.Ed.,	This presentation/ interactive workshop will focus on the use of social narratives--and other related intervention techniques--to effectively help students with autism spectrum disorder become more behaviorally and socially appropriate at school. Recognizing the need to change, finding the motivation to do so and developing new habits is difficult for most people, but it is especially	61

			<p>challenging for children and teens whose neurological make-up frequently leads to high anxiety, a drive to maintain sameness, and a limited ability to accept viewpoints and agendas that differ from their own. The format will include presentation and videos, discussion, and collaborative consultation. Attendees are invited to bring five-minute videos (with parental permission) or brief case descriptions of problems they would like to discuss. For program planning, please notify me at betseyfield@gmail.com by October 10th if you plan to bring a case description or video for discussion and collaborative consultation.</p>	
November 4, 2014	Verbal Behavior	Sharon Peabody, M.S. & Courtney Pacholski, BCBA	<p>What is verbal behavior (VB)? VB is an intervention based on applied behavior analysis that focuses on the components of language that are theorized to be necessary for complete understanding, generalization, and mastery. Research has demonstrated that applying the principals of motivation, reinforcement, stimulus control, etc. can be effective ways of teaching verbal behavior in classroom settings for students with autism or other developmental disabilities. Participants will be able to see the benefit of pairing staff with reinforcement, pairing students with peers who have previously exhibited little interest in others, and how utilizing VB can minimize the occurrence of problem behavior and improve communication in meaningful ways.</p>	46
November 10, 2014	Functional Behavior: Part 2 of 3-part Series	James Artesani, Ed.D., University of Maine	<p>Day 2 of our professional development will include wrapping up our discussion of indirect methods of FBA and a review of</p>	51

			<p>your experiences with the FBA tools introduced on September 12. We will then examine a number of strategies for conducting the Direction Observation portion of FBA. From there we will practice using the “Competing Behaviors” tool to summarize FBA data in a manner that facilitates the development of a function-based behavioral plan. Intervention strategies that will be introduced will include - antecedent-based approaches, teaching replacement behaviors, and consequence strategies to strengthen desired behaviors and weaken interfering behaviors. Each participant will leave with an initial draft of his or her behavior plan.</p>	
February 4, 2015	Lesson Planning, Data Collection, and Progress Monitoring	Cherie LaFlemme	<p>Participants will identify goals for a focus student that are socially significant, and engage in workshop style program development around those goals. Evidence-based interventions such as shaping, task analyses, naturalistic interventions, and peer mediated instruction will be emphasized. Data collection, management, and progress monitoring methods will be aligned, and participants will leave with ready to use lessons that consider generalizability, are conceptually, systematic, and are technically sound.</p>	46
February 11, 2015	Addressing the Needs of Maine’s Youngest Children with ASD – Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education	Catherine Bohls, M.Ed., Susane Boulette, M.Ed., Bethan Jerome, M.Ed., & Debra Rainey, M.Ed.	<p>This Professional Development opportunity will provide participants with information on current research findings at the national and state level. Discussion will focus on the use of evidence-based practices to support young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) framed within current best</p>	47

			<p>practice guidelines for early childhood special education. Participants will also receive information on strategies and resources on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embedding behaviorally-based intervention strategies into a developmentally appropriate, play-based approach - Building strong, positive relationships with families - Supporting successful transitions between programs, and integration in inclusive settings - Making the best use of visual and environmental supports - Developing children’s competency in social interaction 	
February 26 th , 2015	Functional Behavioral Assessment: Creating Positive Environments and Building Skills: Part 3	James Artesani, Ed.D. University of Maine	Day 3 will begin with a discussion of the successes, challenges, and questions encountered while implementing your behavioral plan. In addition, we will explore strategies for problem-solving, by delving more deeply into how FBA can be used as an ongoing process to revise and improve behavioral plans. Strategies for measuring behavioral outcomes and ensuring implementation fidelity will also be shared.	46
March 5 th , 2015	Supporting Your Students with Autism: Practical Applications and Program Development	Courtney Pacholski, M.S., BCBA	How can your school support students with autism? What to look for in the classrooms, components of effective inclusion, addressing challenging behavior, understanding behavior function, how to support staff who work with students with ASD, and putting it all together! This training will be a comprehensive look at autism program development in public schools.	23

			There will be team planning time with a focus on quality program indicators.	
April 6 th , 2015	Transition Planning and the Perspective of Siblings	Cathy Dionne, Autism Society of Maine, Director & Karen Gorris-Hicock, M.Ed., Resource Room Teacher	<p>“Helping an individual through multiple transitions”</p> <p>This session will provide the participant with an understanding of the impact of transition on the life of a student with autism spectrum disorder. It will address how to prepare a student for any transition whether it is from activity to activity, within school grade levels, post-secondary education, employment, or independent living. Special emphasis will be placed on the eligibility requirements, assessments, and timeframe for accessing services in the areas of post-secondary education, employment, independent living, and guardianship.</p> <p>“Understanding the sibling perspective”</p> <p>The session will have a Sibling Panel and will provide insights from siblings. The sibling panel will have a chance to discuss the good parts, the not so good parts, and everything in between. Professionals and parents who attend sibling panels usually say that they leave knowing a lot more about sibling issues than they did before. There will be opportunity for audience members to ask question from the siblings.</p>	25
April 9, 2015	Fostering Independence and Safety for Children and Adolescents with ASD	Matt Brown, Federal Law Enforcement Officer, Autism Safety Trainer & Parent Amy Benham, Special Education Department Head, AOS 92	Students with autism spectrum disorder may be more likely to act impulsively, to wander, or run away than their typically developing peers. This creates a higher level of risk for becoming lost or for getting injured. Safety is a critical part of our lives, and always in the minds of families with children who have autism. This training will address safety	70

			<p>planning for schools and essential skills schools must address for keeping children safe. Emergency planning, bully prevention, community awareness and communication, and tips for schools to work along side families to ensure goals are established to foster independence and safety in both school and the community.</p>	
<p>May 20th, 2015</p>	<p>Language and Communication for Young Children with Autism</p>	<p>Judith Stickles, Clinical Director, UMaine CSD</p>	<p>The majority of children diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) will have difficulties with communication skills, usually with receptive/ expressive language skills. Many may also have difficulty with nonverbal communication skills. Autism Spectrum Disorder affects the communication development of children in different ways and can range from no apparent verbal communication to subtle differences in the comprehension and use of social communication. The presenters, Catherine Toste CCC-SLP and Judith Stickles CCC-SLP are both practicing speech-language pathologists who regularly work with young children at the Conley Speech and Hearing Center at the University of Maine. They will discuss the evaluation of communication skills in young children with ASD, including how to recognize and interpret communication attempts. Best practice in treatment approaches will also be discussed including treatment approaches for the child with ASD who may need an augmentative communication approach. Social communication development will be emphasized. Strategies for early literacy development will also be discussed. Several</p>	<p>132</p>

			case studies will be presented.	
	2014-2015 PD Workshops Total Attendees			746
2015-16 Academic Year				
August 25, 2015	Early Intervention and Evidence-based Practice	Cathy Pratt, BCBA-D	Two day training to support early interventionists working with children with autism and developmental disabilities and their families.	137
August 26, 2015	Early Intervention and Evidence-based Practice	Cathy Pratt, BCBA-D	Focus on evidence-based practices for very young children with autism.	137
September 15, 2015	Functional Thinking: Behavioral Problem-solving for Teachers	James Artesani, Ed.D.	Addressing challenging student behaviors that are sometimes exhibited by students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in school settings has increasingly become the responsibility of all educators. Function- Based Thinking (FBT) is a process for thinking systematically about behavior, the environment in which it occurs, and developing interventions that match the function of the behavior. In recent years, FBT has emerged as a promising approach for helping general education teachers assess the environmental factors that contribute to challenging behaviors, as well as the function such behavior serves for the individual student being assessed. Further, FBT allows educators to systematically problem-solve solutions for less severe, but ongoing behaviors, which interfere with academic achievement and social/behavioral growth.	59
September 24, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 1 –		AOS 96, CDS Downeast, LI – North, MSAD 31, RSU 3, RSU 18	62

	North teams			
September 26, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 2 – North teams		AOS 96, CDS Downeast, LI – North, MSAD 31, RSU 3, RSU 18	62
September 28, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 1 – South teams		Lisbon, LI – South, RSU 2, RSU 14, RSU 21, Sanford, Wiscasset, York	74
September 29, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 2 – South teams		Lisbon, LI – South, RSU 2, RSU 14, RSU 21, Sanford, Wiscasset, York	74
October 5, 2015	Literacy and ASD: Part 1	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	In a fast paced, engaging format, you will learn about the factors that influence reading and writing across the autism spectrum, develop a framework for thinking about literacy instruction, and be introduced to specific strategies for meeting these learners' needs.	62
October 6, 2015	MALT Literacy Day 1	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	Specially designed 5-day training to support current Maine Autism Leader Teams focused on literacy and ASD with strategies and EBPs to support school-aged individuals with autism.	42
October 7, 2015	MALT Literacy Day 2	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	Specially designed 5-day training to support current Maine Autism Leader Teams focused on literacy and ASD with strategies and EBPs to support school-aged individuals with autism.	42
October 23, 2015	Zigging with the Ziggurat Model: Designing comprehensive interventions for high functioning individuals with ASD	Deborah Rooks Ellis, Ph.D.	Participants will focus on how to use the Ziggurat Model, a guide for designing comprehensive behavior interventions for individuals of all ages with autism spectrum disorders. The Ziggurat approach centers on a five level system, structured in a hierarchy, with each level representing an area that must be addressed in order for an intervention plan to be comprehensive. The	27

			<p>premise of the Ziggurat Model is that underlying needs and characteristics related to the autism spectrum must be addressed.</p> <p>The training materials and methods ensure that both novice and experienced staff gain knowledge and skills that they can immediately use. Hands-on team activities and case examples with immediate coaching and feedback to increase the participants' experience in using the Ziggurat Model will be provided. Throughout the training, there is an emphasis on evidenced-based practices and fidelity in implementation.</p>	
October 29, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 3 – North teams		AOS 96, CDS Downeast, LI – North, MSAD 31, RSU 3, RSU 18	62
October 30, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 4 – North teams		AOS 96, CDS Downeast, LI – North, MSAD 31, RSU 3, RSU 18	62
November 1, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 3 – South teams		Lisbon, LI – South, RSU 2, RSU 14, RSU 21, Sanford, Wiscasset, York	74
November 2, 2015	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 4 – South teams		Lisbon, LI – South, RSU 2, RSU 14, RSU 21, Sanford, Wiscasset, York	74
November 9, 2015	Autism Spectrum Disorders and Alternative/Augmentative Communication	Mark Hammond, CCC-SLP	<p>Children with Autism can present with a variety communication challenges. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) can provide a means to achieve functional communication ability. This presentation will help support persons to identify initial communication needs of children with autism who have limited expressive communication abilities as well address their long term potential needs. Low</p>	40

			<p>tech AAC tools and strategies to support the child in learning and in gaining access to desired items will be discussed. High tech AAC tools that can help the child to progress towards improved communicative competence will be explored. The progression from initial evaluation through full implementation of AAC will be presented. Participants will leave with strategies that they can implement with any child with limited functional communication.</p>	
December 7, 2015	Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports and ASD	Courtney Pacholski, M.S., BCBA, University of Maine	<p>Positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) is a model of Response to Intervention (RtI) for behavior that is implemented in over 20,000 schools across the country. The goal of PBIS is to prevent and reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviors of students through the use of evidence-based practices. Behavioral methods and strategies for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can be implemented in a tiered approach that may be beneficial to ALL students in the school community. This training will aim to (a) discuss universal evidence based practices and strategies to support individuals with ASD, (b) consider targeted, intensified, and individualized interventions and supports for individuals with ASD within a school-wide framework, and (c) provide participants with practical ideas and examples on how to widen the school-wide lens to include supports and interventions for children with ASD.</p>	79
February 29 th , 2016	Overview of PECS and the Pyramid Approach: Creating	Catherine Horton, M.S., CCC/SLP,	<p>This overview is appropriate for all members of the educational team who would like to</p>	45

	Effective Teaching Environments	CAGS, BCBA	learn about the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). This talk begins with a brief overview of the Pyramid Approach to Education. The Pyramid is a model commonly used for creation of effective educational environments. Next, each of the six phases of PECS will be described and/or demonstrated. Videos of PECS in action will be presented to the group. Outcome data will be provided, including a brief discussion on transitioning from PECS to speech and/or Speech Generating Devices (SGD). The training will conclude with review and analysis of common myths associated with PECS. Please note that this is an overview only and is not intended as a training workshop.	
March 7, 2016	Coordinating the Medical and Educational Aspects of ASD	Maine General Hospital, Edmund N. Ervin Pediatric Team	Review of the team approach to evaluation/early diagnosis of children with developmental needs and discussion of the medical criteria for diagnosis of children with autistic disorders. Review physical, occupational, speech, psychology, social work and medical interventions related to language, social interaction and cognitive development; safe mobility and development of functional movement patterns, participation in self-care and other activities of daily living; assisting with feeding difficulties and sensory processing disorders, medication management and other interventions to address difficulties with sleep, nutrition, digestion/elimination and behavior. Case studies will be used to review effective coordination of medical, educational and community services for	40

			children (birth through adolescence) and their families and to encourage networking and problem solving among participants.	
March 24, 2016	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 5 – North teams		AOS 96, CDS Downeast, LI – North, MSAD 31, RSU 3, RSU 18	62
March 25, 2016	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 6 – North teams		AOS 96, CDS Downeast, LI – North, MSAD 31, RSU 3, RSU 18	62
March 28, 2016	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 5 – South teams		Lisbon, LI – South, RSU 2, RSU 14, RSU 21, Sanford, Wiscasset, York	74
March 29, 2016	MAIER Maine Autism Leader Team Training – Day 6 – South teams		Lisbon, LI – South, RSU 2, RSU 14, RSU 21, Sanford, Wiscasset, York	74
April 8, 2016	Social Thinking	Nancy Clements, MA, CCC-SLP	What are a person’s core social learning challenges and how can we help? Improve your understanding of an individual’s social mind using the Social Thinking Social Communication Profile. With the help of video clips we uncover different levels of perspective taking, executive functioning and central coherence. Discover strategies to help each type of learner improve his or her social interpretation, social skills, reading comprehension and written expression. Learn about the Four Steps of Communication and how to use social media to teach its concepts. All information can strengthen treatment plans and can be used in the home, school and community.	114
April 11, 2016	Video Modeling and Technology in the Classroom	Colleen Foley Ingersoll, M.Ed.,	New technologies are providing teaching tools that enhance our student’s ability to	52

		BCBA	learn in all developmental domains. Children with autism gravitate toward these devices so it is only natural that we would want to maximize these opportunities. We will review research and explore how to use technology, including video modeling, to maximize our impact on a student's development and generate solutions for the challenges faced by our students with autism spectrum disorders.	
May 17, 2016	MALT Literacy Day 3	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	Specially designed 5-day training to support current Maine Autism Leader Teams focused on literacy and ASD with strategies and EBPs to support school-aged individuals with autism.	42
May 18, 2016	MALT Literacy Day 4	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	Specially designed 5-day training to support current Maine Autism Leader Teams focused on literacy and ASD with strategies and EBPs to support school-aged individuals with autism.	42
May 19, 2016	MALT Literacy Day 5	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	Specially designed 5-day training to support current Maine Autism Leader Teams focused on literacy and ASD with strategies and EBPs to support school-aged individuals with autism.	42
May 20, 2016	ASD and Literacy, Part 2	Christi Carnahan, Ph.D. Pam Williamson, Ph.D.	This professional development opportunity will be conducted by nationally recognized experts on literacy and ASD. The content will focus on a balanced approach to literacy including instruction in phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing. Each aspect of literacy will be linked to the unique cognitive, social, and communication issues inherent in ASD. Second session of two-part series.	57
	2015-16 PD Series			575

	Total Attendees			
	Targeted PD (EI and MALT Literacy)			179
	MALT Trainings			14 teams with 136 members
2016-17 PD Series				
September 29, 2016	Social Stories	Carol Gray	Social Stories™ are one of the most widely used evidence-based instructional strategies for learners with autism in the world. Learning how to develop and implement a Social Story is critical to its effectiveness, safety, and integrity. At the close of the workshop, participants will be able to outline the philosophy and research-based rationale, explain how the Social Story goal may be used to determine what is – and is not – a Social Story, list the criteria to ensure integrity and safety of every story, define all Social Story terms, describe how research and philosophy create important ties between how a Story is researched, developed, and implemented; and write a Social Story.	175
October 27, 2016	PBIS & ASD: Impact of Promoting Positive Behaviors	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	This professional development session will provide a basis of understanding for the framework of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the positive impact it will have on student performance and behavior. Attendees will review current programming to identify established PBIS practices and current needs for strengthening practice, as well as learn how PBIS supports students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) across all	55

			three tiers of PBIS.	
November 10, 2016	PBIS & ASD Series: Universal Design for Learning	Katie Novak Ed.D. Shoshana Green, M.Ed.	<p>In this universally designed workshop, educators will experience the power of engagement. By using analogies, concrete examples, and numerous opportunities for participants to personalize their learning. Presenters help to translate UDL theory to practice so all educators leave the workshop with an action plan, numerous resources, and a network of colleagues to support their journey.</p> <p>Throughout the presentation, participants will receive concrete tips to help them implement UDL in their own learning environments to foster engagement in all students. This is a perfect workshop if you want to learn why UDL is critical to improve the outcome of students, learn exactly what the framework is and is not, and most importantly, how to begin to implement the framework immediately to foster self-direction, creativity, and success in all students</p>	49
December 1, 2016	Executive Functioning	Diane Jackson, Ed.D.	<p>Morning Session: “Executive Function Impacting Learning” will review evidence supporting executive function development to support students with ASD in learning. Participants will engage in activities to build awareness of the role of visual and language consistency. Tips for coaching inefficient learners will be modeled and menus of choices for the teacher and students will be shared. The Afternoon Session: “Math Development on the Autism Spectrum” will build on the morning’s executive function theme as it applies to math conceptual and</p>	71

			procedural growth. Participants will engage with the concrete/representational /abstract stages of math learning and be exposed to evidence regarding math learning and gaps as seen on the spectrum.	
February 2, 2017	PBIS & ASD Series: Providing Evidence-based Instruction and Accommodation to Teach Positive Behaviors	Gretchen Sheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	This professional development session will review evidence-based instruction interventions and accommodations to support student learning, engagement and demonstration of expected positive behaviors. Attendees will review current programming to identify established practices, review intervention fidelity and identify current needs for enhancing systematic implementation of evidence-based instruction interventions and accommodations.	72
March 2, 2017	PBIS & ASD Series: Strengthening Positive Behaviors	Gretchen Sheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	This professional development session will review evidence-based procedures for strengthening positive and pro-social behaviors. Attendees will learn how to systematically implement these procedures, monitor fidelity across staff members and student progress, and resources to support these practices.	56
April 13, 2017	PBIS & ASD Series: Responding Constructively to Negative Behaviors	Gretchen Scheibel, MS, OTR/L, BCBA	This professional development session will present a framework for promoting positive behavior by utilizing a constructive response to negative behaviors Attendees will discuss the difference between reacting to negative behaviors and responding in a constructive manner to promote positive behaviors and review their own practices to create a plan for establishing a culture of constructive responding in their classroom.	71
May 4, 2017	The Incredible 5 Point Scale:	Kari Dunn Burton,	This presentation includes an overview of	101

	Extended Version	M.S.	Social Cognition, Executive Function and Emotional Regulation as they relate to Social Anxiety and a Loss of Emotional Control. The speaker will focus on several evidence-based strategies used to teach social cognitive skills while highlighting the use of the 5-Point Scale. Buron will also introduce her latest work, The Social Times Curriculum.	
May 18, 2017	Social Thinking, 2.0	Nancy Clements, M.A., CCC-SLP	This conference day is all about <i>Social Thinking</i> Vocabulary and concepts! Teach students to communicate through concepts such as “working as part of a group”, the “three parts of play,” “abstracting and inferencing information” and “sharing an imagination.” In this advanced workshop we will examine clinical examples that highlight how to make these abstract concepts more concrete and teachable. Participants will work in groups to learn how to use Social Thinking concepts across settings, creating one or two of their own lesson plans. We explore how to make lessons applicable across a variety of environments, and focus on enabling students to apply the lessons into the rest of their lives.	112
	Total Attendees 2016-17 PD Workshops			762
2017-18 PD Series				
September 18, 2017	Maine Autism Leader Team training - Day 1	Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis, Ph.D.	Foundations of Autism Program Self-Assessment Tool Brewer, MSAD 49, RSU 2, Veazie, Wiscasset	50
September	Maine Autism Leader Team	Gretchen Scheibel,	ASD characteristics	50

19, 2017	training - Day 2	M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	Comprehensive autism planning	
September 28, 2017	An OT's Guide to Sensory Processing	Katie Alexander, M.S., OTR/L	This engaging professional development session will review current research findings on sensory processing differences; their influence on occupational performance and participation; and frequently associated diagnoses. Participants will learn how to enhance their practices with occupation and evidence-based strategies for assessment and intervention as well as explore how to use sensory processing expertise to enrich collaborative relationships and strengthen problem solving.	24
September 29, 2017	An Educator's Guide to Sensory Processing	Katie Alexander, M.S., OTR/L	This engaging professional development session will review current research findings on sensory processing differences and the autism spectrum. Participants will learn to describe how sensory processing impacts performance across school settings; document sensory processing differences in the IEP; and improve student outcomes through evidence-based strategies.	42
October 10, 2017	Maine Autism Leader Team training - Day 3	Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis, Ph.D.	Educational supports for students with ASD	50
October 11, 2017	Maine Autism Leader Team training - Day 4	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	Educational strategies for students with ASD Social supports for students with ASD	50
November 13, 2017	Maine Autism Leader Team training - Day 5	Carrie Kern, SLP	Communication supports	50
November 14, 2017	Maine Autism Leader Team training - Day 6	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	Challenging behaviors	50
November 16, 2017	Using Data to Support Decision-making: Part 1	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	The first portion of this two-part professional development training series will provide an introduction to collecting data, including: what data is, different types of data collection, and how to design a data collection systems. This information will	43

			foster a better understanding of how data is used to identify skills to be addressed and monitor skills and behavior over time. The participants will have the opportunity to practice data collection techniques, and design data collection systems.	
December 4, 2017	Using Data to Support Decision-making: Part 2	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	The second session of this two-part professional development training series will provide a overview of data driven decision making, including methods of processing data, interpreting data and how to use data to make decisions. This information will foster a better understanding of how objective data of a student's performance can refine the implementation of interventions and guide decision making to continue, modify or discontinue an intervention. The participants will have the opportunity to process and interpret data to guide decision making.	56
February 15, 2018	Foundational Practices for Students with ASD (Part 1)	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	Learn how to plan for and use the six evidence-based interventions that are considered essential interventions for working with students with ASD. This Workshop (Part 1) will cover Modeling, Prompting, and Reinforcement. Part 2 (offered March 22nd) will cover Task Analysis, Time Delay, and Visual Supports.	90
March 22, 2018	Foundational Practices for Students with ASD (Part 2 of 2)	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	Learn how to plan for and use the six evidence-based interventions that are considered essential interventions for working with students with ASD by attending Part 1 (offered February 15, 2018) & Part 2 of this MAIER PD offering. Part 2 will cover Task Analysis, Time Delay, and Visual Supports.	68

April 5, 2018	Social Emotional Learning for Educators	Elizabeth Hufnagel, Ph.D.	This workshop will provide an overview of social emotional learning (SEL) with an emphasis on emotional sense-making. As indicators of what we care most about and why, emotions are critical to our sense-making of the world as well as ways of communicating that understanding. Dr. Hufnagel will share key aspects of current research on SEL and myths about emotional sense-making in children with autism. During the last part of the workshop, Dr. Hufnagel will discuss strategies for educators in supporting emotional learning in children with autism.	43
April 12, 2018	Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Jennifer Seale, Ph.D.	This workshop is for anyone wishing to learn more about the ways in which augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) techniques, tools and strategies can benefit and support individuals with autism across the lifespan. Workshop content is easily adapted to individuals with wide-ranging skill levels and at various developmental stages. This workshop will highlight the importance of providing diversified communication supports in the classroom, on the playground, at places of employment and particularly during life transitions (with particular focus on issues surrounding adolescent-to-adulthood transitions for individuals with Autism).	38
May 3-4, 2018	SCERTS Training: Program planning for working with students with ASD	Amy Laurent, Ph.D., OTR/L	This two-day training, presented by Amy Laurent, Ph.D., OTR/L (coauthor of the SCERTS® model), will lead to a thorough understanding of the SCERTS model and provide participants with the knowledge and skills to implement the model in their	42

			<p>classrooms. This model provides specific guidelines for helping a child become a competent and confident social communicator, while preventing problem behaviors that interfere with learning and the development of relationships.</p> <p>The SCERTS® Model is a research-based educational approach and multidisciplinary framework that directly addresses the core challenges faced by children and persons with ASD and related disabilities, and their families. SCERTS refers to <i>Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support</i>(Prizant & Weatherby, 2005)</p>	
May 10, 2018	Social Thinking 3.0	Nancy Clements, M.A., CCC-SLP	<p>This workshop will explore three practical frameworks and teaching strategies. First, Social Behavior Mapping (SBM) is a visual framework that teaches how to better understand the social expectations in a given situation and guides us to strategies specific to an individual’s needs. Next, we explain the journey between learning to be friendly and maintaining successful friendships through our Peer-a-mid of Friendships. We will also offer some basic concepts and ideas for running Social Thinking groups and by demonstrating how to better understand the inner minds of individuals with social learning challenges when our standardized testing falls short.</p>	135
	2017-18 PD Series Total Attendees			539
	Targeted PD (SCERTS Training)			42
	MALT Trainings			5 teams

				with 50 members
2018-19 PD Series				
October 4, 2018	Beyond the Birds and the Bees: Sexuality and Relationship Education for Persons with Autism and DDs	Victoria Slocum, Ph.D.	The first of a two-part workshop to present the history as well as the current state of sexuality and relationship education for people with autism and developmental disabilities. This workshop will present the history as well as the current state of sexuality and relationship education for people with autism and developmental disabilities; evidence-based strategies for including sexuality education in special education curricula and IEPs; present resources currently available for teaching sexual health education; and present strategies to use when facing barriers. A resource list will be available.	37
October 22, 2018	Building Resiliency in School-aged Children: The Resilient Brain	Elyse Pratt-Ronco, Ph.D.	Collaboration between MAIER and SPRPCE to offer this 5-part Series. Overview of how trauma and stress impact the brain, gaining an understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)	125
October 29, 2018	Building Resiliency in School-aged Children: Educating with Poverty in Mind	Elyse Pratt-Ronco, Ph.D.	Collaboration between MAIER and SPRPCE to offer this 5-part Series. Poverty and the impact, with strategies that help mitigate the negative effects of poverty	125
November 1, 2018	Teaching Emotional Regulation Skills to Children	Terese Dana, M.S., BCBA	To successfully respond to life's everyday social interactions, children need to be able to regulate their emotions. In this workshop, specific behavior management techniques that focus on prevention, problem solving, and defusing emotionally charged situations will be introduced. Easy to implement, evidenced-based methods will be discussed	102

			and practiced. Participants will learn how to incorporate a categorization system that uses visuals as supplementary cues and prompts to increase self-regulation. Each participant will receive a set of visuals to carry over strategies learned during the workshop.	
November 5, 2018	Building Resiliency in School-aged Children: Hope is Not an Emotion	Elyse Pratt-Ronco, Ph.D.	Collaboration between MAIER and SPRPCE to offer this 5-part Series. Learning about what hope is as a cognitive construct and how hope can be “grown” in students/children. Practice hope-building skills.	125
November 28, 2018 Webinar	Identifying and Avoiding Pseudoscientific and Controversial Methods in Autism Treatment and Education	Jason Travers, Ph.D., BCBA	The use of ineffective and pseudoscientific interventions negatively impacts students with autism, wastes time and other limited resources, and can lead to frustration and burnout. Unfortunately, the social media revolution has made it increasingly difficult to identify effective interventions for these learners. This webinar will share resources and a process for scrutinizing intervention claims and will emphasize a process for selecting interventions most likely to confer student benefit. (2 hours)	23
December 3, 2018	Building Resiliency in School-aged Children: Be a Lamp, a Lifeboat, a Ladder	Elyse Pratt-Ronco, Ph.D.	Collaboration between MAIER and SPRPCE to offer this 5-part Series. The importance of relationships in building resilience. How to build relationships with students and the role we play in their lives.	TBD
December 5, 2018 Webinar	Using Research-based Strategies to Teach STEM	Victoria Knight, Ph.D.	In this presentation, Dr. Knight will articulate the rationale for including students with a range of learning needs, including students with ASD, in STEM content and contexts. She will focus on cutting edge research in	Postponed until spring 2019

			<p>this area to support this rationale. In addition, she will discuss methods she has used internationally to train professionals to promote content-based learning for all students in the classroom.(2 hours)</p>	
December 10, 2018	Building Resiliency in School-aged Children: Classroom Strategies	Elyse Pratt-Ronco, Ph.D.	<p>Collaboration between MAIER and SPRPCE to offer this 5-part Series. Breaking down barriers to social mobility, strategies for the classroom and building academic perseverance.</p>	TBD
February 7, 2019	Preparing for the Transition to Adulthood for Students with Disabilities: What do you need to know?	Sarah Howorth, Ph.D., BCBA	<p>Morning: Transition Services and Requirements of IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Services for Students under IDEA • Transition Services for Students and Youth with Disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act • Distinctions between New Terms • Coordination and Collaboration between State Educational Agency (SEA) and VR Agency • Youth with Disabilities No Longer in School • Examples to Consider: States are Coordinating Transition Services <p>Afternoon: Supporting Student-Made Decisions for Adult Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting High Expectations for Secondary School Students with Disabilities • Person-Centered Planning • Addressing Students' Social and Emotional Needs • Providing the Student and Youth with Support to Make Their Decisions 	TBD

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Informed Choices 	
February 20, 2019 Webinar	Written Expression Needs and Strategies for Students with Disabilities	Sara Flanagan, Ph.D.	This session will explore common challenges that face students with disabilities in writing. Then, it will demonstrate potential interventions for each, including those that are more “traditional” (paper-based graphic organizer) and using technology (ex. Inspiration software, assistive technology). (2 hours)	TBD
March 14, 2019	Executive Function/Mindfulness: Explored and Applied	Diane Jackson, Ed.D.	To successfully respond to life’s everyday social interactions, children need to be able to regulate their emotions. In this workshop, specific behavior management techniques that focus on prevention, problem solving, and defusing emotionally charged situations will be introduced. Easy to implement, evidenced-based methods will be discussed and practiced. Participants will learn how to incorporate a categorization system that uses visuals as supplementary cues and prompts to increase self-regulation. Each participant will receive a set of visuals to carry over strategies learned during the workshop.	TBD
April 11, 2019	Creating a Toolbox: Sexuality and Relationship Education	Victoria Slocum, Ph.D.	Second of a 2-part workshop presenting the history as well as the current state of sexuality and relationship education for people with autism and developmental disabilities. This session will utilize current research to provide specific guidelines for educators and family members/caregivers in understanding what to teach and how to teach sexuality education concepts. We will also discuss self-determination skills, which can help people with ASD make decisions about personal safety, avoid high-risk or	TBD

			dangerous social or sexual situations, and increase personal independence, while exploring the difficult balance that exists between sexual self-advocacy and guarding against sexual abuse.	
May 23, 2018	Social Detective, Superflex, and Friends Take on Social-Emotional Learning	Nancy Clements, M.A., CCC-SLP	Learn how to teach the award-winning You Are a Social Detective! and Superflex curriculum to boost social awareness and self-regulation. We'll explain the critical scope and sequencing required to teach these materials with fidelity and improve social competencies. These books are designed for elementary school children, but we'll explain how to modify them for use with older kids. Lessons support Social and Emotional Learning programs (SEL), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and Response to Intervention (RTI). Interactive, creative group activities abound in this conference! Ultimately, learn how to encourage generalization and social learning for a lifetime.	TBD
	Total Attendees 2018-19			TBD
PD Archives Made available to view online after live presentation				# Viewings (10/31/18)
	Social Stories	Carol Gray	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	11
	PBIS & ASD: Impact of Promoting Positive Behaviors	Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	4
	PBIS & ASD Series: Universal Design for Learning	Katie Novak Ed.D. & Shoshana Green,	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	4

		M.Ed.		
	Executive Functioning	Diane Jackson, M.Ed.	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	5
	PBIS & ASD Series: Providing Evidence-based Instruction and Accommodation to Teach Positive Behaviors	Gretchen Sheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	7
	PBIS & ASD Series: Strengthening Positive Behaviors	Gretchen Sheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	17
	PBIS & ASD Series: Responding Constructively to Negative Behaviors	Gretchen Scheibel, MS, OTR/L, BCBA	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	17
	The Incredible 5 Point Scale: Extended Version	Kari Dunn Burton, M.S.	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	10
	Social Thinking, 2.0	Nancy Clements, M.A., CCC-SLP	*See description above in 2016-17 PD Series	6
	Total Viewings			81

Table 3
Early Start Maine Family Survey Comments

ESDM Family Survey

Q5 - What was most helpful about the services you and your child received?

[] helped us and showed us how to handle everyday tasks and activities.

[name]'s ability to listen and follow directions has improved greatly. I also found it incredibly helpful to observe and gain new ways to help him achieve goals.

[PSP] and [ESDM-P] worked very hard to provide communication skills in order the decrease frustration. They also were very good advocates for my child and provided resources when needed.

Being able to receive services/support in home and out in the community helped my child and I practice transitioning skills that he was learning to different settings.

Q6 - What else would you like to share about your experience?

My overall experience with ESDM was helpful to interact with my child and seeing first hand that my child was making progress at different types of play. I enjoyed the program and my child did also. We are happy to have participated.

I love how [] jumped in and adapted to our family dynamics

[name] came leaps and bounds in many areas that were tough for him. We are so happy he was able to receive ESDM for the last 3-4 months.

The amount of progress made in such a short amount of time with the ESDM was astounding. Thank you so much for all you have done for my child and for what you continue to do for others!

My son has blossomed tremendously with []'s support in his tolerance of other children, interest in the world around him, simple routines and his ability to communicate.

Being able to talk with the provider to get a better understanding of what ESDM was and how it can help my child gain the skills he was unable to do before.

Overall, I thought [son]'s provider did a wonderful job working with him. I am very pleased in the progress he has made since we first started his services.

By the end of ESDM my son was able to communicate a lot of his needs without much frustration or no frustration at all. My child now uses a 3 word sentence to request, uses a noun & it's describing word (sometimes), calls for attention and points at things or people saying "Look," now has a strong index point, eye contact has improved a lot, increased his vocabulary, independently & appropriately uses exclamations like, Oh no, uh oh, nice, great job, oh my God, who is it? (when someone knocks at the door)

The aspect of carrying on at home the different kinds of play I observed between the provider and my son equipped us with a wealth of knowledge on how to further teach and help our son. We are so proud to say because of this intervention we feel more confident in the direction we are going.

Communication gained by child because of services

That is ESDM was a great program and it has helped my children and given me a lot of good insight.

Communication skills for my child.

My child has come very far intellectually and socially. He has gained so much knowledge, and he is very comfortable with the provider.

Communication uses sign and words now and didn't before. Less frustrating.

Great program. Kids and family benefited a lot. Very helpful.

Consistency and learning how to interact

[PSP] was great, always had answers to my questions before our next visit. [Child] loves her, we will miss her!

Evaluation of his growth mentally
Everything

n/a

Everything

I feel that ESDM (X for provider example) should continue to work with the child longer than the age of three because the child is use to the person, and the connection has been made for learning. Example X with [child] has just got the really know him and now he has to get use to another person and program. The ESDM person should follow the child longer (great grandfather)

Everything about the service was great the techniques the strategies for support and giving us all the Resources to help us as a family

I was really blessed to have this service with my young boys who are five and three years old now I wish This service started before that time because when my seven years old was 2 This wasn't an option

Everything was very helpful. Our son now makes eye contact, he turns when hearing his name. He now knows how to ask for thinking by pointing. He gained a lot out of services. I strongly feel that the ESDM has helped our son!!!

I thank you for all that you do!!!

Everything! The coaching helped our family be able to help our child on our own

Early intervention is SO important! [] is amazing and ESDM has changed our lives and our sons without him even knowing it. [symbol of a heart]

Great tips on how to get {child}'s attention. Diff ways to help him communicate.

[Child] wasn't open to meeting new people. Since ESDM he is more aware of people around him

Having a caring and supporting worker who is there and willing to do anything for you your family and especially your child....

I would love to say that the learning I received for my child has been exceptional!!!!

Having a consistent therapy schedule was helpful. Being able to participate and learn new skills to [be] helpful too. We are very grateful as well that we were able to have her therapy sessions in our home

Having the challenge of intense one-on-one engagement was the most helpful service for my child. Challenging our child to learn new skills in this way was something we alone could not do.

Having the same person consistently work with my child helped. Also, coming where he was most comfortable helped show what he could actually do.

He got one on one help from a professional
He is starting to learn to communicate better.

Helping [child] to find some form of a voice. Even if it wasn't full on verbal words.

It helped my son communicate with us much better than prior to having services

[ESDM-P] and [PSP] were amazing! I am so grateful for their help and support. It was a pleasure to work with them!

The last year has been a challenging schedule for the entire family, though we did enjoy having the opportunity to watch our child in this setting and feel the in-home service was very accommodating to our family needs. Our service provider made a great effort to work with our schedule & we very much appreciate that.

My son made extreme progress and gains while doing the ESDM model. He went from no speech to talking a lot.

[] was absolutely amazing with my son & she will be greatly missed.

[PSP] was a fantastic teacher! And [child] took to her quickly, thank you so much for allowing him to participate so close to his age three cut off.

Our esdm provider was amazing!! She was so great with our son and helping us as parents learn the skills we needed to continue the work throughout our days after her lessons were done!

It wasn't pushy they took it at my child's pace while still adding in new things. They worked with him and I, showing me how I could get progress as well. They made me feel good about our visits. And my child really enjoyed the time he had and the new learning experiences.

Language development and eye-contact improvement. Prior to services, our son had a handful of words and only yelled when he needed our attention. Now he regularly uses words and eye contact in day to day interactions.

Learning how to best help [Child] learn to communicate and promote communication

Learning new strategies

Learning new ways to do different task and having group support from provider

Learning to engage her in what we're doing, getting her attention and keeping it.

Learning to speak to my child in a way that helped him move forward with as little confusion as possible.

Less aggression

This helped open up my child in so many areas that weren't open to him before and they helped us learn and modify thing to help him learn. This is a wonderful program and I'm happy with the results we got from this.

We couldn't be more thankful. Our son has learned so much and we can see just how PROUD he is of himself with these newly acquired skills. We'd love him no matter what, but there's a new joy in his eyes that makes our hearts melt.

Provider was very understanding and cared about my whole family needs

I loved everything that was taught to me and my daughter as [?] as progress that was made! CDS is the best thing to happen to my family and ESDM really works!

Great program. Very helpful.

This program showed me that with all my worries my son can succeed in anything no matter how worried I may become. The Early Start Denver Model also showed me that for my child it can teach how to need people and care about them. My son [child name] learned to love and miss [name] and for other people this was one of my biggest worries [ESDM name] has been amazing.

I wish it did not end at 36 mos.

My child learned how to play better with others and learned some communication skills.

my child start talking a lot , play with siblings, enjoy being with others

My overall experience with ESDM was helpful to interact with my child and seeing first hand that my child was making progress at different types of play. I enjoyed the program and my child did also. We are happy to have participated.

My son gained so much in the short time he was working with [PSP], we're very happy with his non-verbal communication, eye contact and social skills advancements.

My son has severe language development delays. This program could not have been more helpful with helping me figure out how to best teach him not only how to talk and get the help he needs, but also helping him understand the point of communication and how important it is. He has come an amazingly LONG way when it comes to getting across what he needs and/or wants.

n/a

new strategies done one on one

Questions were always answered in a timely manner.

Seeing her gaining new skills

Our EDSM worker []was fantastic with my son and I felt very comfortable having her in my apartment.

I wish our ESDM move to live with us, she made the life soooo easy .

Nothing, it was great and we would have happily continued with the program and [PSP] had we not moved out of state.

I just want to thank CDS and the ESDM program from the bottom of my heart. Our PSP was Amazing. She was wonderfully patient and kind with my son and helped us both learn SO SO much.

n/a

great model , very helpful

I am thrilled at how far my daughter has come since she started ESDM. She is more social and playful with us.

If you do what the providers tell you your child will succeed. I wish ESDM stayed until a program was available.

Speech therapy

We had a very terrible experience. Our provider cancelled last minute frequently and often short changed the two hour session by only coming in for 45 minutes. All said and done, she came in 17 total days and was out for 33. How is that acceptable? My child NEEDS services and the only option is this? He is three in two weeks and now because of this fraudulent terrible person, he was totally robbed of what he deserves. I am still waiting to hear what exactly is going to be done about this and how this will be made up to my family.

Spending sessions with my son at his daycare/school to expand social and communication skills.

The care the professionals had and showed my son. He really like them and responded well to their instruction.

Support and coaching

These supports and services are key to successfully transitioning into special needs parenting. I only wish they were more readily available at an earlier age.

That they were in home.

The ability of people to come to my son whether at daycare, home or grandparents

Na

Great experience just wish I knew about the program sooner. Asked our pediatrician for a autism referral at 2 years but they said nothing about CDS. Only after Maine Pediatrics diagnosed him 6 M later did we find out about you. Intermed should have known we didn't need to wait for. Diagnosis so more education for local pediatrics would be helpful for others

The ability to observe and communicate effective strategies.

ESM was amazing for my child. Her care provider was willing to go above and beyond for her and me. We will miss her and our so very thankful for the lessons and help.

The aid of her teacher in working with us to create customized learning games and approaches, in which to we, reasonably, could carry over and do with her ourselves to help support success for our daughter's goals.

I cannot speak highly enough of our daughter's teacher [name]. She is exceptional in her knowledge, her commitment to excellence and her seemingly never ending patience. She has made us feel at ease with her kind demeanor and positivity while a presence in our home for the past year. I believe it is a testament to her commitment as an educator that we find ourselves feeling confident and prepared for this upcoming transition. I wish there was more funding for these programs so that these educators were appropriately compensated and in the hopes that more would enter the field for all the children who need their aid to come.

The coaching was great, if you take the time to listen to what they are saying and you really follow through you will see so much progress with your child. I'm so grateful for all the help I received for [child]

I know it's difficult to have people in your house, but they really do give you the tools to access your child, I know more of what he wants, he plays with toys how they are intended, they give you the tools to succeed with your child. Yay for ESDM

The consult time was much more helpful than the rigid plan

I'm sure that this model works for many children, but it was not a fit for my daughter. I wish that was identified earlier so that we could stop pushing something that wasn't working and focus on a plan that would work. I'm sure that therapists are bound by how much they can say, but in this situation I think the therapist could see that the strategies employed in this model were not a fit but couldn't draw that conclusion.

The EDSM program was the start of our daughter being able to communicate. We saw more improvement in her communication and social skills in the first couple of months than we ever thought possible. Our providers did a great job of working with the needs of our family. Both parents worked full time and care was mostly given at her grandmother's house but there was always open communication when needed.

This is a wonderful model and was very beneficial to our daughters growth and development. It's almost scary to think about where she would be today if she hadn't been fortunate enough to receive these services. It truly made a difference. I wish nothing but success for this program and all the future kids you will be helping.

The growth my daughter had over the past year was amazing.

Loved the program and I wish there was a local ESDM preschool program.

The most helpful part was learning and watching him have longer seated activities. Also improving with eye contact.

Had a wonderful experience with ESDM. My child picked up on some new skills and has started to make better eye contact.

The most helpful to us was ways to communicate and how to work on social skills

We had a very excellent experience and we learned so many new ways to help our child that we never even thought of

The most helpful was the teacher being able to teach me strategies/tips with how I can keep activities/exercises a continuous part of our families schedule

I am forever grateful and thankful for the time, thought, and care put into my son's care. He has had a wonderful team helping him, through the ESDM program, and all of you have helped him grow so much. He is totally ready to conquer Preschool! I think the ESDM program has helped in so many ways.

the one on one attention the both received

I wish we could have started sooner as well as lasted longer

The one on one interaction with another adult aside from me, and the information I was given to carry over to help my son was helpful.

My son had many issues with social interaction and with language. In the year I was in the program he made a lot of positive progress now playtime is very enjoyable and he goes to preschool where he has made new friends.

The opportunity to observe the worker with my child. I learned so much, and it helped in giving me confidence in my ability to teach my child.

I really appreciate the quality of teaching/working with my child. He learned a lot in a small amount of time. I like how genuine and helpful workers are.

The services my son and family received were very helpful for his social skills and behavioral habits. They focused on his skills and areas he was lacking to make the learning fun. He interacts and makes eye contact a lot more since he started the program. The staff worked around my schedule and with my son's needs to help him.

ESDM has benefited my child so much. Now that he's turning 3 I am confident he will be able to go to pre-school. He can communicate enough and is willing to interact with the teachers after receiving the ESDM. I'm very thankful for all they have done for me and my boy. Thank you.

The services were so helpful all the way around. Not only did they help my children they helped me with so many new strategies. I'm very thankful for them!"

I'm so grateful for CDS!

The support and encouragement! Everyone has always been so involved in [child's] well-being and progress.

I wish there was more connection and communication between CDS and the school systems for when children leave the ESDM model to go to schooling programs. We were always being told new additions to information once both sides heard one another.

The therapist being available to answer questions and provide a listening ear when needed. Giving advice about problem areas and things to try.

I'm very grateful for your work with [daughter]

The way to help him playing and communicating.

I'm happy about [] improvement.

They have taught [child] to communicate with us and also helped with [can't decipher rest of sentence].

Fabulous services

they took the time to understand my child and our family and work on a personalized plan addressing all of our concerns. The coaching aspect was extremely helpful because it taught us new skills and tricks for engaging with our son that had huge outcomes for both him and us.

This was a really big transition for our family in the beginning and CDS could not have been any better of a resource for us. They addressed the needs of every member of our family in making the plan and always offered us resources and information helping to ease us into this new lifestyle. There isn't a single thing I would have changed and ESDM has brought out so many amazing changes in our son. We could not be more proud or excited for him.

They were great in giving advices and answering all my questions whenever I had one

:)

Watching and learning ways to work with him and communicate, such as sign

That it was wonderful and helpful, [Child] thrived.

It let me observe new ways to communicate with my kid. I also learned new ways to allow my son to be himself while communicating his needs with me such as choosing an item by looking at it or grabbing it.

[Child] and I loved having his teacher [ESDM] come and play and show him new toys! She is absolutely amazing when [child] chooses to like a person he does so for life. Thank you.

Our provider always found a way to help me with each task she faced. She also helped me understand how to get her to do the tasks and one up the task as we are doing it.

Gaining strategies that allow my daughter to communicate, rather than show behaviors from frustration when. Unable to communicate.

I would like to start by saying thank you so very much [provider] for helping my little girl. If it wasn't for ESDM I don't know where my daughter would be. Also I would have never been able to carry on after my [provider] leaves. Thank you so much.

My daughter went from being non communicative with anyone but myself (her mother). It prevented bonding with family, and much emotional and other support in the household for my daughter. She now communicates her wants with every member in the house, shows affection (to the best of her ability), and has even started playing and interacting with children and people in the community. My heart could not feel more happy about this. It has been amazing watching her "awakening". I would also like to share that. It is a lot of work. But consistency on the parents part is key to the success. I am very fortunate to have had such wonderful workers who helped ME help my daughter. Great experience. I feel my daughter is prepared and has a great start to learning skills for life now.

Table 4
MAIER Community Outreach

Date	Activity	Impact
	UMaine community	
2014 to present	Volunteer opportunities to support the education and experiences of graduate and undergraduate students at MFP events. (SPED, Education, Child Development, Communication Science & Disorders, Media/Journalism majors.)	5-7 MFP events per year; provides opportunities for students to experience and interact with children with ASD and their families.
2014 to present	UM Student mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate student final project for Autism Certificate • Autism at UM club (2 yrs) • Served as “client” for Communication/Journalism students (2 semesters)
2017	Support UM faculty with students with ASD	Faculty Resource webpage <i>Supporting College Students with ASD</i> : https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/supporting-college-students-autism-spectrum/ .
2018	UM campus event: Presentation and discussion by Derek Volk, Author of <i>“Chasing the Rabbit: A Dad’s Life Raising a Son on the Spectrum.”</i> Co-hosted with Student Accessibility Services at the University of Maine	Open to students, faculty & staff, local community & family members. 100+ community members attended Insights and experiences of a father raising a child with ASD.
2018	UM Campus Event: Equity, Access, and Inclusion: A World Usability Day Event at UMaine (hosted by SAS)	Invited Speakers: MAIER presented, “Breaking down classroom barriers: Supporting students at UMaine with Autism.”

	Volunteer trainings (2)	
2015 2016 2017 2018	<p>Direct Mailings: <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD; Road Map to Services</i> Brochure</p> <p>Developmental and Pediatric Clinics Health and Social Service professionals ASM, MPF CDS sites Educators, Child Development, SLP, OT, PT, Psychologists, Social service and support professionals</p>	<p>Handbook Distribution 2015: 428+ Jan 2016-June 2016: 408+ FY 2016-17: 1285+ FY 2017-18: 952+ <i>Note: These numbers likely under represent full distribution as not all deliveries are accounted for.</i></p>
2014- 2018	MAIER Family Partnership	See MFP section of this report.
	Professional Conferences and Invited Presentations	
November 2015	<p>OCALICON Columbus, OH A Collaborative Statewide Approach to Early Intervention for Young Children with ASD Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis, Debra Rainey, Bethan Jerome, Susane Boulette</p>	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
March 2016	<p>American Council for Rural Special Education Las Vegas, NV Building a Sustainable Professional Development Model in Maine: Observational Strategies and Reflective Coaching in Action Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis</p>	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
October 2016	<p>Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Louisville, KY Integrating the Early Start Denver Model with Routines-based Early Intervention in Maine</p>	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.

	Debra Rainey and Bethan Jerome	
June 2017	New England Early Intervention Conference Portland, ME Early Start Maine: Families' Experiences and Satisfaction with this Early Intervention Model Shannon Smith and Susane Boulette	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers and educators.
June 2017	New England Early Intervention Conference Portland, ME Parent Coaching Modules: Inspiring Positive Adult and Child Interactions in Everyday Routines Karen Pratt and Debra Rainey	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers and educators.
October 2017	Kennedy Krieger Center for Autism and Related Disorders Annual Autism Conference Baltimore, MD Shannon Smith	Networking, professional development.
December 2017	Zero to Three Annual Conference San Diego, CA Parent Coaching Modules: Inspiring Positive Adult and Child Interactions in Everyday Routines Karen Pratt and Debra Rainey	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
January 2018	Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clearwater, Florida The Autism Impact Measure: A comparison between provider and primary caregiver perspectives of incremental change across core autism symptom domains in very young children Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
February 2018	Council for Exceptional Children St. Petersburg, Florida The Autism Impact Measure: A comparison	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.

	between provider and primary caregiver perspectives of incremental change across core autism symptom domains in very young children Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis	
March 2018	American Council for Rural Special Education Salt Lake City, Utah Preliminary results of a systematic statewide implementation model to improve access to evidence-based intervention for young children with ASD Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis	National dissemination. Conference session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
October 2018	Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Orlando, FL Early Start Maine: Parent Coaching Modules, poster session Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis	National dissemination. Poster session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
October 2018	Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Orlando, FL Parent Coaching Modules: Inspiring Positive Adult and Child Interactions in Everyday Routines, poster session Debra Rainey	National dissemination. Poster session attended by researchers, faculty, families, and educators.
November 2018	OCALICON: Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Conference Columbus, OH Early Start Maine resources shared	Networking, professional development
March 2019	American Council for Rural Special Education Alexandria, VA	Accepted presentation. National dissemination.

Table 5
MAIER Website Statistics

Webpage	Content	Subpages	Activity #page views (#unique page views)
Total Page views			2014: 7,957 (5,936) 2015: 19,704 (14,137) 2016: 23,257 (18,214) 2017: 25,854 (18,985) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 23,717 (17,854)
Homepage: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/ Created 1/2014	Welcome, News postings, Links to major pages		2014: 2,925 (2,164) 2015: 4,3480 (3,342) 2016: 3,845 (2,955) 2017: 3,590 (2,450) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 3,743 (2,376)
Professional Development: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/trainings/ Created 1/2014	News and announcements of interest to Educational Professionals: training opportunities and updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current year MAIER PD offerings • Special training opportunities • MALT information • Online training via MAIER PD Archives 	2014: 1,769 (1286) 2015: 3,085 (2,206) 2016: 2,590 (1,875) 2017: 2,284 (1,819) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 2,309 (1,796)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD Calendar • Online Registration 	
<p>Events Calendar: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/events/</p> <p><i>Created 1/2014</i></p>	<p>Listing of MAIER Professional Development and Trainings events, MFP Events, and community autism events.</p>	<p>Full descriptions, fees, location, and registration information for each event</p>	<p>2014: 445 (349) 2015: 915 (599) 2016: 1,367 (1015) 2017: 1,308 (962) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 1,309 (952)</p>
<p>Family Resources: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/</p> <p><i>Created 1/2014</i> <i>Updated/revised Summer 2017</i></p>	<p>Online version of the <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i></p> <p><i>Roadmaps to Services Brochure</i> (downloadable)</p> <p>State, Federal, and National resources, toolkits, and guides of interest to families impacted by ASD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maine Resources • Family Life & Developmental Resources • National & Federal Resources • <i>Roadmaps to Services Brochure</i> • <i>Maine Parent Guide to ASD</i> 	<p>2014: 273 (199) 2015: 1,113 (779) 2016: 1,009 (781) 2017: 1,018 (722) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 683 (479)</p>
<p>Pathways: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/pathways/</p> <p><i>First Issue: April 2015.</i> <i>Totals reflect the # page views to homepage, current issue, and previous issues during that year.</i></p>	<p>Current issue of MAIER newsletter, including information of interest to professionals, families, and interested community members.</p> <p>Links to previous</p>	<p>Pathways Archives (past issues)</p>	<p>2015: 598 (390) 2016: 719 (609) 2017: 864 (735) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 197 (149)</p>

	issues of <i>Pathways</i>		*Note: Fall 2018 issue not yet distributed
<p>MAIER Family Partnership: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/</p> <p><i>Created 7/2014</i></p>	<p>Description of MFP and invitation to join.</p> <p>News, events, and projects of interest to Maine families impacted by ASD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places and Spaces Project [added 2016] • Maine Parent Guide to ASD [added 2015] • MFP Events • Family Resources [revised and updated 2017] • Community Event Calendar • MFP News Archives 	<p>2014: 203 (167) 2015: 579 (412) 2016: 573 (445) 2017: 528 (353) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 537 (329)</p>
<p>About Us: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/about-us/</p> <p><i>Created 1/2014</i></p>	<p>Mission Statement & Philosophy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff bios • Quarterly Reports • Early Start Maine Initiative 	<p>2014: 205 (157) 2015: 505 (350) 2016: 403 (304) 2017: 443 (313) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 713 (476)</p>
<p>Early Start Maine: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/about-us/early-start-maine/</p>	<p>Description of Early Start Maine Initiative, & the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Start Maine Brochure • <i>Early Start for</i> 	<p>2015: 250 (153) 2016: 399 (339) 2017: 431</p>

<p>Created 4/2015</p>	<p>“First Steps” (ESDM) Training module for professionals (<i>Note this is a private area accessible only with permission</i>)</p>	<p><i>Your Child</i> manual for parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Private: First Steps Training Module</i> 	<p>(357) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 581 (464)</p>
<p>Parent Coaching Modules: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/parent-coaching-modules/</p> <p>Created 2/2016</p>	<p>Introduction to PC Modules designed to encourage positive emotions and happy interactions with your child in a manner that promotes learning. Each module includes information, resources, and activities to help parents and caregivers help his/her child achieve important learning goals. Based on the principles of the ESDM.</p>	<p>Module 1: <i>Capturing your child’s attention</i> Module 2: <i>Find the Smile</i> Module 3: <i>Talking Bodies (Part 1)</i> Module 4: <i>Talking Bodies (Part 2)</i></p>	<p>2016: 491 (363) 2017: 399 (191) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 413 (242)</p>
<p>Graduate Certificate in ASD: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/courses/graduate-certificate/</p> <p>Created 2/2015</p>	<p>Program description, requirements, and course descriptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Application • Program Director Contact 	<p>2015: 833 (670) 2016: 983 (829) 2017: 348 (277) 2018 (Jan-Oct): 394 (338)</p>
<p>Trainings: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/trainings-2/</p> <p>Created 2015</p>	<p>Information regarding MAIER autism trainings for</p>		<p>2015: 383 (277) 2016: 538</p>

	communities, organizations, and school districts and autism-related trainings offered by other Maine entities.		(440) 2017: 323 (246) 2018: (Jan-Oct): 236 (175)
<p>First Steps Training Module: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/about-us/early-start-maine/first-steps-training/</p> <p><i>Created February 2017</i></p>	<p>Online training for Early Start Maine using the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM). Password protected web pages made available to professionals seeking ESDM first level training through MAIER.</p>	<p>Introduction to ESDM, 5 training sections that include readings, activities and instructor contact requirements.</p>	<p>2017: 259 (157) 2018: (Jan-Oct): 247 (125)</p>
<p>Professional Resources and Research: https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/</p> <p><i>Captured under "Resources" until updated/revised late 2016 to make subpage</i></p>	<p>Links to National Autism centers, research institutions, and organizations with autism-related PD and training, EBP, and other resources for professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism research and training centers • Resources for supporting college students on campus 	<p>2016: 8 (8) 2017: 128 (95) 2018: (Jan-Oct): 170 (138)</p>

Note: Due to UM website platform changes in early 2016, the restructuring of MAIER webpages at that time may affect "Activity" reported. We have made every attempt to reflect true activity; however, in some cases page views may be underrepresented.

Abbreviations:

ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorders
 EBP: Evidence-based practices
 ESDM: Early Start Denver Model

MALT: Maine Autism Leader Teams
MFP: MAIER Family Partnership
PD: Professional Development

Maine Autism Institute for Education & Research

X. Appendices

Appendix A Maine Family Partnership Outreach Examples

MAIER Family Partnership Brochure


 THE UNIVERSITY OF
MAINE
 Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research
 5746 Sibley Hall, Room 303
 Orono, ME 04469-5796

For more information or to contact: umaine.edu/autisminstitute | maineautisminstitute@maine.edu
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 Maine Autism Institute
 for Education and Research

Maine Family Partnership



How To Reach Us

Tel: 207-581-2352
 Fax: 207-581-9510
 Email: maineautisminstitute@maine.edu
 Website: umaine.edu/autisminstitute



Contact us to subscribe to our e-newsletter, *Pathways*

Maine Family Partnership in the Parent Guide to ASD

Who We Are

The Maine Family Partnership (MFP) is an initiative of the **Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER)** established to partner with families affected by autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in Maine. MFP members and MAIER staff work together to promote greater awareness, education, and research to benefit individuals and families affected by ASD.



About ASD

In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 1 in 68 children were diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Autism may impact an individual's communication skills, behaviors, and interactions with others.



What We Do

- Support family-to-family mentoring and networking.
- Identify and address topics relevant to Maine families.
- Promote greater awareness and understanding of ASD in your communities.
- Host family events.

How to Join

Parents, siblings, family members and individuals living with or affected by ASD are welcomed to join the MFP. Contact MAIER for more information about joining or visit our website:

umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership

Samples of MFP event flyers



A Visit to Santa's Village

Hosted by the
Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research Family Partnership
and the **Maine Discovery Museum**

Sunday December 2nd, 2018, 4pm to 6:00pm

At the **Maine Discovery Museum, 74 Main St. Bangor**

During their "My Day to Play" time for families with
children/teens/adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Come visit with Santa
and his elves in our
sensory-friendly
Santa's Village!

Discover the Museum
and enjoy holiday
activities, snacks &
other surprises!



"My Day to Play"
events are a
special time when
the Museum is open
only for children
with autism
spectrum
disorders, siblings,
and their families.



This holiday event is **FREE** for families impacted by ASD,
but pre-registration is required to help us plan our activities.
Register online at: <https://goo.gl/forms/YhDmYAf74VDK0mrC3>



To register by phone or email, contact:
Donna at MAIER
Phone: (207) 581-2468 or email: donna.doherty@maine.edu
Learn more about MAIER and our Family Partnership on our website:
maineautisminstitute@maine.edu

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Ready for a new adventure?

Join us for an afternoon of **ADAPTIVE CLIMBING** at the
Maine Bound Adventure Center

This **FREE** event is for children, teens, and adults
on the autism spectrum and their siblings, families, and caregivers



Sunday November 18th, 1-4 pm
Maine Bound Adventure Center
University of Maine, Orono



The Adaptive Climbing program is designed to provide assistance and accommodations for individuals with cognitive or physical differences, no experience necessary! All equipment is provided and specially trained staff and volunteers will instruct participants.

Co-Hosted by the

Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research Family Partnership,
Maine Bound Adventure Center &
Adaptive Outdoor Education Center at
Carrabassett Valley



Registration with MAIER is required to help us with our planning

Register online at: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/event/adaptive-climbing-event/>

Or call or email Donna at MAIER (207) 581-2468 / donna.doherty@umaine.edu



To learn more about MAIER, Visit our website:
maineautisminstitute@umaine.edu



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The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research Family Partnership and the Auburn Lewiston YMCA are partnering for an



Outdoor Adventure Day

for families with children/teens/adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Archery!

Saturday June 23rd, 2018

10:30am to 2:30pm

Volleyball and other games!

at the **AL YMCA Outdoor Education and Learning Center**

Located on 93 wooded acres along Stetson and River roads in Auburn

Thanks to our community partners, this event is **FREE** for families attending!

Nature Activities & Bubble Fun!



Accessible Hiking Trail and Low Ropes Course



We are hosting a **BBQ lunch at noon** for all!

Pre-registration is required and space is limited so

Register by Friday June 15th!

For more information and to register contact:

Donna at MAIER (207) 581-2468 or

Email: donna.doherty@maine.edu

Registration will be closed when capacity is met.

Tear off and contact us today!

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Appendix B

MAIER PD Series Speaker Bios

2015-2016

Katie Alexander, M.S., OTR/L

Katie C. Alexander, MS, OTR/L is an occupational therapist and clinician-researcher who has presented at the state and national level. Ms. Alexander received her BS and post-professional masters from the University of Kansas Medical Center. For over 15 years, she has specialized in community and school-based intervention for individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities and served as the founding program director for the Model Asperger Program at The Ivymount School. Her research and clinical interests are in developing interventions and supports that improve the daily lives of individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families. Ms. Alexander is a co-author of “Unstuck and On Target!: An Executive Function Curriculum to Improve Flexibility for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Research Edition” and “Solving Executive Function Challenges: Simple Ways to Get Kids with Autism Unstuck and on Target.” Katie Alexander, M.S., OTR/L

Courtney Angelosante (Pacholski), M.S., BCBA

Lecturer in Special Education, University of Maine
Courtney Angelosante has worked as an educator since 1998. She is a lecturer in special education at the University of Maine. Courtney provides consultation to schools for students with autism. Courtney works with several school districts to increase capacity to provide quality education and behavioral interventions with fidelity.

James Artesani, Ed.D., University of Maine

Dr. James Artesani, Chair of the Department of Teacher and Counselor Education at the University of Maine, and Associate Professor of Special Education, will provide this workshop. Dr. Artesani provides professional development and consultation to many Maine schools in the areas of schoolwide positive behavioral intervention and support, and individualized behavioral assessment and intervention.

Catherine Bohls, M.Ed.

Catherine Bohls holds a Masters in Early Childhood Special Education and currently works in Head Start and Early Head start as Education Coordinator and Coordinator of Services for Children with Disabilities.

Susane Boulette, M.Ed.

Susane Boulette, M.Ed., is a research associate with the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER). She holds a Masters in Early Childhood Special Education, specializing in early intervention. Sue has worked with young children and their families for the last 12 years in a variety of environments as a case manager, developmental therapist and early interventionist. Prior to that she was the owner, operator and teacher of Sunny Start Nursery School.

Amy Benham, M.Ed.

Amy Benham has been teaching special education for 30 years. She is currently teaching in a Functional Life Skills/Autism Program in AOS #92 and is serving as Special Education Department Head. Amy contributed to the Evidenced Based Practices Advisory Committee and has been a strong advocate for students with autism in public schools

**Matt Brown, Founder, Autism Safety Education and Training (ASET)
Retired Federal Law Enforcement Officer, Autism Safety Trainer**

Matt Brown is an ASM Autism Information Specialist and retired Federal Law Enforcement Officer and has developed a training program for police, fire and EMS on how to recognize autism and how to appropriately interact with individuals with ASD. Maintains an active ASET website offering free resources and to assist families, first responders, and communities related to safety, wandering, law enforcement, and first responder training for interacting with individuals with ASD.

Dr. Christina Carnahan

Dr. Christi Carnahan is a former special education teacher in both elementary and middle school, and is currently an Associate Professor of Special Education at the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Carnahan has expertise in students more impacted on the autism spectrum and brings the needed background and specialty of functional communication for students who have no language or limited language. She will address how to teach literacy to students on the entire continuum.

Nancy Clements, M.A., CCC-SLP

Nancy Clements, MA, CCC-SLP, is a speech-language pathologist and executive director of Social Thinking Boston, where she creates a culture of learning, caring, and creative programming. She's a member of the Social Thinking Training & Speakers' Collaborative and developed Brain Boards, a framework that helps build emotional awareness and strategies for improving self-monitoring. She runs Greater Boston's Social Thinking Clinical Training Program, which trains those with experience using the Social Thinking Methodology in advancing their skills.

Jill Conley, M.Ed, BCaBA, RSU 26

Jill Conley is a special educator in RSU 26.

Therese Dana, M.S., BCBA

Terese Dana, M.S., BCBA, received her master's degree in Educational Psychology with an emphasis in Applied Behavior Analysis from the University of Southern Maine. She has been working with students since 1988, focusing on the acquisition of social and emotional-regulation skills. Ms. Dana has produced a social skills, video modeling series that includes the titles; Fitting In and Having Fun, Moving on to Middle School, Confident and In Control and High School Life: Unspoken Expectations. She has also created File Factor Emotional Empowerment System. This tool uses visuals to teach children how to respond effectively in emotionally charged situations. Her materials are distributed worldwide. Ms. Dana was the founding board president of the Laura Foundation, and is currently the program designer and behavioral consultant for the Laura Adaptive Recreation Center in Madison, NH. She has been lecturing in the U.S and Canada since 2003.

Cathy Dionne, Executive Director, Autism Society of Maine

Cathy E. Dionne is a parent of a 20 year-old boy with autism, Ben, and a 22 year old daughter, Ashley. She lives in Greene, Maine with her husband of 27 years, Rick. Ben was diagnosed with autism at the age of 18 months, and her family's interesting journey began at that time. Right away she began her education about the world of autism with all of its therapies, appointments, and family adjustments. She became involved with the Autism Society of Maine (ASM) in 1996 first as a member of the Board of Directors, and then became Vice President.

Kari Dunn Burton, M.S.

Kari Dunn Burton M.S. taught in K-12 with students on the autism spectrum for 30+ years and was a founding member of the MN Autism Project. She developed an Autism Spectrum Disorders Certificate program for educators at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN. In 2003, Kari received a fellowship that allowed her to spend a year interviewing and working internationally with a number of scientists and researchers in the area of Social Cognition and Education, with a focus on challenging behaviors. In 2012, Kari was inducted into the Illinois State University Education Department Hall of Fame.

Sara Flanagan, Ph.D.

Sara Flanagan is an assistant professor of special education at the University of Maine. Her research focuses on written expression challenges and needs, and developing interventions for students with disabilities across grade levels. She also explores how to best use technology to support literacy learning and in a way that supports instruction.

Colleen Foley Ingersoll, M.Ed., BCBA

Colleen Foley-Ingersoll, M.Ed., BCBA, has more than twenty years of experience working with children and adolescents with disabilities including autism spectrum disorders in both school and home settings. Colleen earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education/Moderate Special Education at Northeastern University in Boston Massachusetts. While completing her undergraduate coursework, she developed a passion for teaching children with autism and continued her education by acquiring a Master of Science degree in Early Intervention/Intensive Special Education at Northeastern University. She began her career in Special Education as an assistant and then lead teacher at The May Institute in 1992. After working at The May Institute for 7 years, she moved to Maine and was the director of The REACH School at Child Development Services. While working at The REACH School, she continued her studies by completing the Applied Behavior Analysis Course Series at Florida Institute of Technology's Graduate Professional Development program and became a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. In January 2014, Colleen joined the Woodfords Family Services team as a BCBA in the Westbrook and Topsham Preschool Programs.

Karen Gorris-Hicock, M.Ed., Resource Room Teacher

Karen Gorris-Hicock M.Ed, presently works as an Information Specialist for the Autism Society of Maine and as an educator for RSU 20. Her Master's degree is in education of youth with severe disabilities with a concentration on transition. She has worked as a program coordinator for the Maine Transition Network, an educator for Waldo Regional Special Services, and within group homes and as a provider of respite care. She has over 25 years of experience in working with individuals with disabilities and their families.

Carol Gray

Carol Gray is a Consultant to Children, Adolescents, and Adults with Autism, providing support via workshops and presentations, information, referral, resources, and direct services for individuals with autism, their families, and professionals who work on their behalf. She is an internationally sought-after keynote and seminar speaker, and has completed over 1,000 presentations.

Carol is best known for the development of Social Stories, a well-respected evidence-based practice used worldwide with people with autism of all ages. Carol was the first teacher for students with autism at Jenison Public Schools in Jenison, Michigan, employed there from 1977 through 2004. In 1989, Carol began writing stories for her students to share information with them that they seemed to be missing, information that so many of us take for granted. Many of the stories resulted in immediate and marked improvement in her students' responses to daily events and interactions.

Shoshana Green, M.Ed

Shoshana Green is a special education teacher who is currently co-teaching an integrated third grade classroom. She earned her Master's of Education at Lesley University in Cambridge, and is certified in Moderate Disabilities grades K-8. Shoshana has ten years of experience in both pull out and inclusion services in a resource setting. As a co-teacher, Shoshana designs and delivers curriculum and instruction using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to meet the needs of her students. Her years of experience, knowledge about special education students, and her keen sense of humor make her a fantastic resource for teachers who want to know how to use UDL to meet the needs of special education students.

Catherine Horton, M.S., CCC/SLP, CAGS, BCBA

Catherine Horton is dually-certified as both a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). She graduated summa cum laude from the University of Maine with a B.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders. She went on to earn a M.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders from the University of New Hampshire. Catherine has earned the Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership from the University of New England. Most recently, Catherine has also completed all requirements for certification as a behavior analyst.

Prior to her employment with Pyramid Educational Consultants, Catherine worked as a speech language pathologist providing therapy to children with significant special needs in hospital, group home and school settings. Catherine has been a consultant at Pyramid for over 10 years. She currently provides trainings regarding PECS and the Pyramid Approach to Education to parents and professionals across the United States. Catherine also consults to educational teams across the country, focusing on the development of functional communication systems and effective educational environments for students with special needs. She has also published literature in both Focus on Autism and the Autism Advocate. Catherine has a wealth of expertise in working with students with developmental disabilities and is passionate about her work.

Sarah Howorth, Ph.D. BCBA

Sarah K. Howorth, Ph.D, BCBA is an assistant professor at the University of Maine. Her research interests include assistive technology, augmented reality, PBIS, and improving employment and transition outcomes for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities. Sarah is a board-certified behavior analyst, and has 18 years of experience in special education. She has taught as a classroom teacher in Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, and Shanghai (China).

Elizabeth Hufnagel, Ph.D.

Elizabeth (Beth) Hufnagel is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine. Her research centers on emotional sense-making in educational settings, from the perspectives of both learners' and teachers. She draws from psychology, sociology, and linguistics to examine emotions contextually and as part of language. She has almost two decades of experience teaching at the elementary, high school, and university levels during which she has taught a wide variety of students with exceptionalities.

Diane Jackson, M.Ed.

Diane Jackson, EdD, has had teaching experience in the K-12 schools primarily focused on students with high incidence disabilities but also students who struggle academically. Diane has been teaching in the Special Education Department of the University of Maine for over 20 years and her interest in academic struggles has lead to working with Student Accessibility Services on campus and individuals regarding career struggles. She firmly believes we can all improve our Executive Skills to increase efficiency.

Bethan Jerome, M. Ed.

Bethan Jerome, M.Ed. is a research associate with MAIER. She holds a Masters in Early Childhood Special Education/Autism, and has worked as a home-based early intervention provider with toddlers with ASD, as an itinerant special educator supporting young children with ASD in community preschools, and as the senior lead teacher in an inclusive ABA-based preschool specializing in autism.

Victoria Knight, Ph.D.

*Victoria Knight, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor at the University of British Columbia. She has more than 20 years of experience working with students who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Her research interests include: (a) applying principles and tactics derived from ABA to promote learning of core content, especially in the areas of STEM; and (b) evaluation and dissemination of evidence-based practices for students with ASD. She has published, presented, and trained educators in these areas internationally. Dr. Knight has developed a curriculum for teaching students with severe disabilities science content. She serves on the editorial boards of three journals, including *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities* and *Focus on Autism and Developmental Disabilities*. She works closely with undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students across several research projects.*

Amy Laurent, Ph.D., OTR/L

Amy Laurent is a developmental psychologist and a registered pediatric occupational therapist. Currently in private practice, Amy specializes in the education of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and related developmental disabilities. The majority of Amy's work involves collaborating with and supporting early intervention teams, school teams, and families. The SCERTS Model, of which she is a coauthor, along with differentiated instruction and developmental theory, guide her practice. Amy is an adjunct faculty at the University of Rhode Island.

Katie Novak, Ed. D.

Katie Novak is an internationally recognized expert on UDL, is currently the Assistant Superintendent of the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District. With 14 years of experience in teaching and administration and an earned doctorate in curriculum and teaching, Katie designs and presents workshops both nationally and internationally focusing on teacher implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), multi-tiered systems of support, and next generation skills.

Sharon Peabody, M.S., SLP

Sharon lives in China, Maine with her husband and two children. Sharon has a Certificate of Clinical Competence through the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, of which she is a member. Sharon has worked in public schools as a speech and language pathologist for 26 years, and has 6 years experience working in inpatient and outpatient speech and language rehabilitation for MaineGeneral in Waterville and Augusta.

Cathy Pratt, BCBA-D, Indiana Resource Center for ASD

Cathy Pratt BCBA-D is the Director of the Indiana Resource Center for Autism. IRCA is a statewide program that works to build local capacity for families and professionals to address the needs of individuals on the autism spectrum across the lifespan. This is done through training, consultations, coaching, research, and information development and dissemination.

Dr. Pratt is also the Director of the Indiana School Mental Health Initiative. Indiana School Mental Health Initiative provides resources, training, and advocacy to build the capacity of school district staff and community partners so they can address the social, emotional, and behavioral health needs of Indiana's school-age children and youth to increase school engagement and improve educational outcomes.

Dr. Pratt coordinates the Autism Special Interest Group (SIG) through the Association of University Centers on Disability (AUCD). Dr. Pratt serves on numerous Advisory Boards, including the Advisory Boards of Maap Services, Inc., the Temple Grandin/Eustacia Cutler Autism Fund and the College Internship Program. In the past,

she served on the Board of the national Autism Society and is the Immediate Past Chair.

Debra Rainey, M. Ed.

Deb Rainey, is an Early Childhood Specialist with over 25 years experience in early childhood special education. She earned a B.S. in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Maine in Farmington and a M.Ed. in Early Intervention from the University of Maine, Orono, with a concentration in autism. In addition, Deb completed certification in the Leadership in Neurodevelopmental Disorders (LEND) program and Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) for teaching young children with autism. She has worked with young children and families in a variety of settings and programs over the years providing special instruction as well as consultation to support the inclusion of all young children and families in community settings.

Most recently in her position with the University of Maine's Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER), Deb provides training, consultation, and coaching to professionals to build their capacity to implement ESDM throughout the state. Deb is committed to the field of early childhood education/early childhood special education and keeps current with best practice and evidence-based methods to meet the needs of young children with autism and families.

Deborah Rooks-Ellis, Ph.D.

Deborah's education, experience and research interests focus on evidence-based practices to support very young children with disabilities and their families. individuals with low incidence disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder. This includes research focused on personnel preparation and professional development to support educators working in the field of special education. Deborah has been awarded two Office of Special Education federal personnel preparation grants, as both principal investigator and co-PI, totaling \$3 million. Additionally, Deborah has been awarded \$1 million in cooperative agreements with the state of Maine to focus on providing professional development to support to children and adolescents with autism and their families.

Gretchen Scheibel, M.S., OTR/L, BCBA

Gretchen Scheibel, MS, OTR/L, BCBA is a behavior consultant working in Midcoast and Central Maine. She specializes in designing educational programs based on the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports framework and the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis. Dually certified as a Behavior Analyst and an Occupational Therapist she possesses a unique understanding of special education and the necessary supports to promote student success, her practice focuses on using an evidence-based approach to promoting positive behavior and improving functional performance in the education

environment. Ms. Scheibel presents nationally on the topic of building interdisciplinary collaboration and demonstrating the value of occupational therapy in complex practice environments, additionally she provides programmatic consultation on interdisciplinary collaboration and evidence-based practice implementation.

Jennifer Seale, Ph.D.

Jennifer M. Seale is an Assistant Professor at the University of Maine where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the Communication Sciences and Disorders department. Her academic, research and clinical interests are focused on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) science and practice. Dr. Seale has expertise providing AAC services to diverse client populations, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Her research aims to inform AAC service delivery and product design using human computer interaction, interaction analysis and mixed-methodology techniques. In addition to these interests, Dr. Seale is devoted to advocacy and public education around important social and systemic issues unique to the AAC community.

Victoria Slocum, PH.D.

Dr. Victoria Slocum is Director of Academic Accessibility at Asbury University in Wilmore, KY. She holds a PhD in Special Education as well as certificates in assistive technology, cognitive disabilities, behavior disabilities, and learning disabilities. Her present research includes sexuality and relationship education for people with intellectual disabilities, as well as the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in their faith communities.

Judith Stickles, M.A., CCC-SLP

Judith Stickles is the Clinical Director of the UMaine Communication Sciences and Disorders program and teaches both academic and clinical courses. Additionally she serves as a clinical educator both on campus and off campus and teaches the Diagnostic Clinic. Prior to joining the department, she worked with children and adolescents with communication disorders in public and private schools in Eastern Canada and Maine, and taught at the University of New Brunswick. Special areas of interest include language disorders in adolescents, literacy development and disorders, issues impacting school-based practice and clinical teaching, and language and literacy development in children with Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum.

Catherine Toste, M.A. CCC-SLP

Catherine Toste is a speech-language pathologist and clinical faculty member in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Maine. A graduate of Seton Hall University in New Jersey, Catherine worked in skilled nursing

facilities and in early intervention for eight years in New Jersey. In the fall of 2014 Catherine joined the faculty in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Maine.

Jason Travers, Ph.D., BCBA

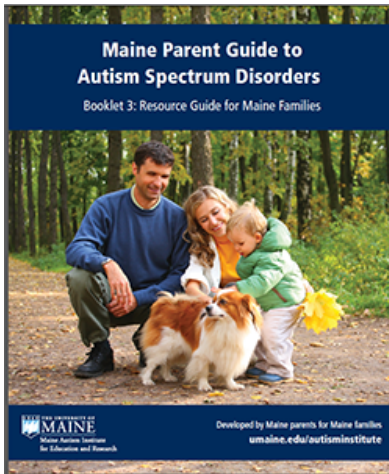
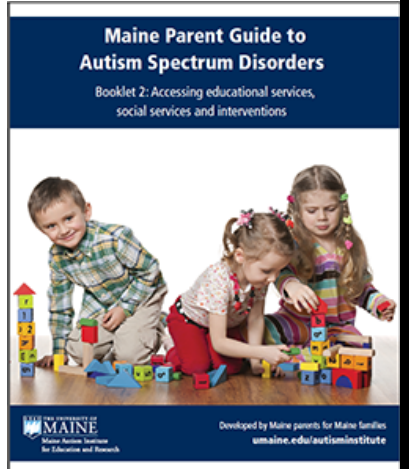
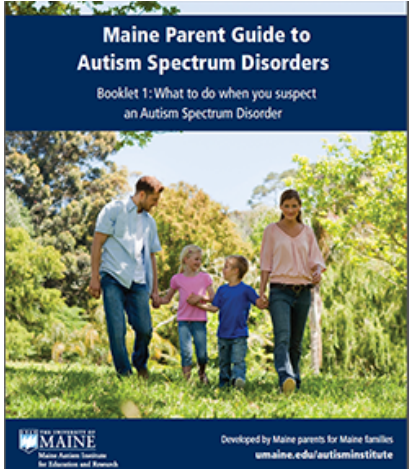
Jason Travers is an associate professor and behavior analyst in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas where he coordinates the graduate programs in autism. His research focuses on technology-based interventions for learners with autism, the under representation of minority children with autism, and the importance of comprehensive sexuality education for this population. Jason also promotes evidence-based practices and healthy skepticism among special education professionals. He received the inaugural Tom E.C. Smith Early Career Award in 2015 from the Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities and the Outstanding Mentor Award from the Association for Behavior Analysis International in 2017. His article titled "Evaluating Claims to Avoid Pseudoscientific and Unproven Practices in Special Education" was selected as the 2017 Must Read Article of the Year by the Council for Learning Disabilities.

Dr. Pamela Williamson

Dr. Pam Williamson is a former special education teacher in both elementary and middle school, and is currently an Associate Professor of Special Education at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. She currently works with both pre service and inservice teachers, preparing them to deliver high quality literacy instruction. Dr. Williamson has expertise with students on the spectrum, with an emphasis on students primarily in general education, and will focus on literacy instruction for these students.

Appendix C Screenshots of MAIER Developed Resources


Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders (2015)



Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders, 2018 (2nd edition)

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/maine-parent-guide-asd/>


Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders
Booklet 1: What to do when you suspect an Autism Spectrum Disorder



THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
Maine Autism Institute
for Education and Research

Developed by Maine parents for Maine families
umaine.edu/autisminstitute


Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders
Booklet 2: Accessing educational services, social services and interventions



THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
Maine Autism Institute
for Education and Research

Developed by Maine parents for Maine families
umaine.edu/autisminstitute


Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders
Booklet 3 — Living with Autism:
High School and Adult Life on the Spectrum



THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
Maine Autism Institute
for Education and Research

Developed by Maine parents for Maine families
umaine.edu/autisminstitute

Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders
Booklet 4: Resource Guide for Maine Families



THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
Maine Autism Institute
for Education and Research

Developed by Maine parents for Maine families
umaine.edu/autisminstitute

Road Map to Service Brochure:

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/wp-content/uploads/sites/150/2017/05/MAIER-BrochureFinal.pdf>

Resources after diagnosis

Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER)
MAIER partners with families to promote greater awareness, education and research to benefit individuals and families affected by ASD.
207.581.2352
umaine.edu/autisminstitute
maineautisminstitute@umaine.edu

Autism Society of Maine (ASM)
ASM provides education and resources to support individuals on the autism spectrum and their families, including information sheets, online referral database, support groups and special events.
800.273.5200
asmonline.org
info@asmonline.org

Maine Parent Federation (MPF)
MPF is a community for families of children with disabilities, including autism. MPF provides information, help with referrals, one-on-one phone support, parent-to-parent connections and training.
800.870.7746
mpf.org
parentconnect@mpf.org

Maine Child Development Services (CDS), Maine Department of Education
CDS provides screenings and evaluations, case management and educational support to families.
877.770.8883
maine.gov/deecds

Maine Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC)
MDDC is a partnership of people with disabilities, their families and agencies advocating for positive change.
800.244.3990
maineddcc.org
info@maineddcc.org

Assistance programs

MaineCare
Maine DHEHS offers MaineCare, a financial assistance program for health care. These programs are available to those who meet income guidelines and are eligible based on age, family situation and health care needs.
207.287.3707
maine.gov/dhhs/mainecare.shtml

Katie Beckett option
Katie Beckett is a MaineCare option for children with serious health conditions. It is one of the ways your child can receive MaineCare.
207.624.7900
maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/cbbs/eligibility/katiebeckett.html

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MAINE
Maine Autism Institute
for Education and Research

Are you concerned your child may have an autism spectrum disorder?

Road Map to Services

Maine Department of Education

This publication was produced with funding from the Maine Department of Education, Office of Special Services

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Does your child show early signs of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

Development at 12 months

- A child with typical development will turn his head when he hears his name.
- A child with ASD might not turn to look, even after his name is repeated several times, but he will respond to other sounds.

Development at 18 months

- A child with delayed speech skills will point, gesture or use facial expressions to make up for her lack of talking.
- A child with ASD might make no attempt to compensate for delayed speech or might limit speech to parroting what is heard on TV or what she just heard.

Development at 24 months

- A child with typical development brings a picture to show his mother and shares his joy.
- A child with ASD might bring a bottle of bubbles to open, but does not look at his mom's face when they play together.

ASD signs at any age:

- ✓ Repeats motions (rocking or spinning)
- ✓ Avoids eye contact or physical touch
- ✓ Has delays in learning to talk
- ✓ Repeats words or phrases (echolalia)
- ✓ Becomes upset by minor changes

Ask yourself:

- If you point at something across the room, does your child look at it?
- Does your child point with one finger to ask for something or to get help? (i.e., pointing to a snack or toy that is out of reach.)
- Does your child respond when you call her name?
- Does your child look you in the eye when you are talking, playing or dressing him?
- Does your child understand when you tell her to do something? (i.e., if you do not point, can your child understand "bring me the blanket?")

If you answered no to more than two of these questions, contact your pediatrician and request an autism screening.

Here's what you can do right now

Make an appointment with your pediatrician
Ask for your child to be screened for an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Bring a list of concerning behaviors, and do not be afraid to request a referral for a comprehensive evaluation at a diagnostic clinic in your area.

Contact Maine Child Development Services
A diagnosis is not needed to contact CDS with concerns. Find a CDS office in your area, 877.770.8883, maine.gov/deecds/contact.shtml.

Talk with your child's teacher
If your child is in school, talk with your child's teacher and school special educators. Your child will be evaluated by school professionals to determine eligibility for special services.

Educate yourself
Learn about ASD, related services and local service providers. The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) is a good place to start. Contact MAIER for more information, 207.581.2352; maineautisminstitute@umaine.edu.

MAIER offers a "Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders" free to parents and caregivers. The three-volume guide can be downloaded as a PDF (umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources). Contact MAIER to receive a free print copy, 207.581.2352; maineautisminstitute@umaine.edu.

BOOKLET 1
What to do When you Suspect an Autism Spectrum Disorder

BOOKLET 2
Accessing Educational Services, Social Services and Interventions

BOOKLET 3
Resource Guide For Maine Families

Find a support group
Contact the Autism Society of Maine for a list of local support groups, 800.273.5200; asmonline.org.

Autism impacts
1 in 68
U.S. children

"Don't wait to act on your concerns. If you suspect something is wrong, seek help right away. Early intervention is the most effective way to assist your child's development." - Maine parent

Pathways (e-newsletter of MAIER): <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/pathways/>



Fall 2018

The **Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research** (MAIER) is a partnership between the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development and the Maine Department of Education.

MAIER is dedicated to building state-wide capacity to improve outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

- Leadership
- Training
- Professional Development
- Technical Assistance
- Consultation
- Research

Donate to MAIER

Help support MAIER's outreach to Maine families through our educational and social events. It's easy using our online donation page. FMI or to make a donation, visit our [website](#).

Registration now open for 2018-19 workshops

MAIER Professional Development

- **Webinar:** November 28, 2018: Identifying and Avoiding Pseudoscientific and Controversial Methods in Autism Treatment and Education
- **Webinar:** December 5, 2018: Using Research-Based Strategies to Teach STEM
- **Workshop:** February 7, 2019: Preparing for the Transition to Adulthood for Students with Disabilities. *Jeffrey Cannon, Speaker*

Welcome to the Fall 2018 edition of Pathways

MAIER is off to a busy start with new and exciting educational, professional development, and family partnership opportunities for 2018-19. Check out our new offerings and events highlighted in this newsletter, and join us in the coming year!

We are pleased to announce our 2nd edition of the *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders* is now available. Now a four-volume set, the 2018 edition has undergone review and revisions to update content, and includes new information addressing adults living life on the spectrum, personal safety, family issues, and augmentative and alternative communication. [\[Read more, including how to order your own copy\]](#)

This fall the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) joined the University of Maine Student Accessibility Office for "**Equity, Access, and Inclusion: A World Usability Day Event**" on November 8. This free, daylong conference on the University campus focused on creating environments that prioritize equity, access, and inclusion for all students. MAIER Director, Deborah Rooks-Ellis, Special Education faculty, Sarah Howorth, and MAIER graduate assistant, Brooklin Jones presented the breakout session, "Breaking Down Barriers: Supporting Students with Autism at UMaine." [\[Read more\]](#).

We look forward to connecting with you in the coming year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can be of assistance. Contact us by [email](#) or phone (207-581-2352)

Best regards,
 Deborah L. Rooks-Ellis, Ph.D. Director, Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research
 Donna Doherty, M.S., Editor, MAIER Family Partnership Director



Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research 2018-19 Professional Development Series

We are excited that our 5th annual professional development series is underway! This year we have introduced several 2-hour webinars to our professional development series, allowing for you to learn from where you are! This year's topics include sexuality and relationship education, executive functioning, written expression, transition to adulthood, and more! Our workshops and webinars are designed with educators and education professionals in mind, but are always open to anyone interested, including family members.

Family Resource Center homepage: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/>

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research

Search... Quicklinks

Resource Center

Welcome to our resource center. We have gathered resources specific to Maine families and professionals, as well as some important National and Federal agencies and organizations that can provide assistance. In addition, we offer electronic copies of our *Maine Parent Guides to Autism Spectrum Disorders*, a publication produced by MAIER especially for Maine families. If you are a family impacted by autism spectrum disorders, and would like a print copy of the Parent Guide, be sure to let us know and we will send one to you at no cost to you.

Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Booklet 1:** What to do when you suspect an Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Booklet 2:** Accessing educational services, social services, and interventions
- Booklet 3:** Resource guide for Maine Families

Here is what one family has told us about their experience with the guide: *"I just wanted to thank you for giving our family the Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders. We have several family members on the spectrum, so I gave the booklets to my Mom. She just told me how helpful and enlightening they were for her, and that she felt much more hopeful after reading them."*

To learn more about the Maine Parent Guide, [click here](#).

"Road Map to Services" brochure now available from MAIER!

This comprehensive brochure provides guidance to families who are questioning if their child is showing signs of ASD and provides a roadmap to assessments and services in Maine. Download a

Maine Resources

Family Life and Developmental Resources

National and Federal Resources

Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders

Road Map to Services

Places and Spaces Project homepage: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/places-and-spaces/>

MAIER Family Partnership Places and Spaces Project



MFP Places and Spaces

- [Places and Spaces Directory](#)
- [Community Events Calendar](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Visiting New Places and Spaces](#)
- [Community Tip Sheet \[coming soon\]](#)

"When you encourage a child with autism to explore the world outside school and therapy, the results can be extraordinary."

(Lisa Jo Rudy, Parent and author of "Get Out, Explore, and Have Fun!")


Welcome to MAIER's Family Partnership (MFP) *Places and Spaces Project*. This project was developed in response to a desire expressed by MFP parents to have a place to share information about safe, welcoming, accepting, and fun recreational places around the state.

Explore our *MFP Places and Spaces Directory* to discover some new options for recreation and fun, or rediscover forgotten ones. Directory listings have been compiled through submissions and suggestions from MAIER Family Partnership families and friends. Send us your own suggestions by completing the **Places and Spaces Directory Submission Form**.

Use the **Community Event Submission Form** to let us know about special events for families impacted by ASD in your area.

Advance planning and preparation can make a huge difference as you explore new opportunities and environments. We have gathered some [tips and suggestions](#) from parents and professionals who hope the benefits of getting out and enjoying the outdoors, trying new activities, and exploring new places and spaces can offset the effort it may take to prepare and plan ahead.

Communities benefit by the inclusion of your families as well, and MAIER works with community partners to inform and support them in their efforts to include and welcome all families. As this project grows, we will be


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MFP Places and Spaces

- [Places and Spaces Directory](#)
- [Community Events Calendar](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Visiting New Places and Spaces](#)
- [Community Tip Sheet \[coming soon\]](#)
- [Additional Resources for Families](#)
- [Places and Spaces Directory Submission Form:](#)
Help build our Directory by telling us about your favorite places and spaces in Maine.
- [Community Event Submission Form:](#) Tell us about events in your area especially for families impacted by ASD.

[Directory Submission Form.](#)


Use the **Community Event Submission Form** to let us know about special events for families impacted by ASD in your area.

Advance planning and preparation can make a huge difference as you explore new opportunities and environments. We have gathered some [tips and suggestions](#) from parents and professionals who hope the benefits of getting out and enjoying the outdoors, trying new activities, and exploring new places and spaces can offset the effort it may take to prepare and plan ahead.

Communities benefit by the inclusion of your families as well, and MAIER works with community partners to inform and support them in their efforts to include and welcome all families. As this project grows, we will be adding new resources toward this effort.

Check this out!

For a family-friendly guide full of suggestions on how your family can more fully participate in community life and support the strengths and interests of your child with autism, check out this book by Lisa Jo Rudy, a writer and mother of a son on the autism spectrum. Available on [Amazon](#).



Our sincere thanks to these MFP parents and friends who helped make "Places and Spaces" possible: Jessica Fine, Karen Grotton-Pelletier, Diana McFarland, Angela Morse, and Olivia White.

Parent Coaching Modules homepage: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/parent-coaching-modules/>

Parent Coaching Modules

These Parent Coaching Modules are designed to encourage positive emotions and happy interactions with your child in a manner that promotes learning. They do not require special equipment and take advantage of toys and play materials readily available in most homes. Each module includes information, resources, and activities to help you help your child achieve important learning goals. In a step-by-step manner, the modules will build from teaching you how to capture your child's attention to higher level social communication skills. We will be adding new modules over time, so check back for new information and resources as they are added.

Introduction to Learning

Young children are constantly taking in new information through their senses and learning about the world and others around them at a time when their brains are quickly developing. Research supports the important role parents and caregivers play in your child's learning, including the development of language, play skills, and positive social relationships.

As a parent, you can support your child's learning by helping them engage with others and learn through normal daily routines and play activities. Parents who scaffold, or draw their child's attention to learning opportunities, can turn ordinary play and routines such as eating, bathing and dressing into occasions for learning.

Examples of scaffolding include increasing or decreasing stimulation, providing appropriate toys, repeating or exaggerating your actions, and simplifying and slowing your speech. These actions, when included as part of your child's preferred activities and daily routines, help your child build important social learning skills, including the ability to imitate others, share attention, initiate communications, and play with others.

Parent coaching modules are based on the principles of the Early Start Denver Model and are adapted from Rogers, S.J., Dawson, G., & Vismara, L. A. (2012). *An early start for your child with autism: Using everyday activities to help kids connect, communicate, and learn*. New York: Guilford Press.

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Parent Coaching Modules module page (sample): <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/parent-coaching-modules/module-1/>

Parent Coaching Module 1: Capturing your child's attention

Step into the Spotlight


"Increasing your child's attention can foster fun activities to promote learning*"

Goal: Learn how to increase your child's attention to you as a foundation for fostering learning opportunities for your child.

Why is this important? Learning requires paying attention to people. One of the most important skills for an infant to develop is the ability to watch, listen, and learn from others. Babies and very young children prefer to watch and interact with their significant caregivers more than objects. Looking at and interacting with other people are pleasurable activities for babies and young children. When this skill is delayed or interrupted for some reason, they miss these experiences and opportunities to learn.

What you can do to increase your child's attention to you? The following sections will take you through the five steps that can help you learn ways to improve your child's attention to you. This includes the rationale for each step, and links to additional reading and

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What you can do to increase your child's attention to you? The following sections will take you through the five steps that can help you learn ways to improve your child's attention to you. This includes the rationale for each step, and links to additional reading and videos to support your understanding and illustrate the concepts.

Finally, we have included "Refrigerator Posts" you can download, print and post to your fridge, playroom or anywhere else to use as a handy reminder of ways you can incorporate learning into your daily play and routines.

Click on the following links to view each step for capturing your child's attention


[Step 1: Identify what is motivating for your child](#)
[Step 2: Step on to the stage](#)
[Step 3: Eliminate the competition](#)
[Step 4: Understand your child's social comfort zone](#)
[Step 5: Join in by following your child's lead](#)

Module Summary: The goal of this module has been to help you learn ways to capture your child's attention so learning opportunities can occur. By discovering what captures your child's attention and using these steps to enter their spotlight, you can follow your child's lead to increase your child's attention to you and foster fun activities that promote learning.

 **Refrigerator Posts:** Download and print these pages to post as handy reminders and suggestions for activities to capture your child's attention.

[Refrigerator Posts \[PDF\]](#)
[Refrigerator Posts \[MSWord\]](#)

[Help us by providing your feedback in this short survey](#)



Professional Resource & Research Center homepage:
<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/professional-development-and-resources/>

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Professional Resources and Research



The Autism Center at OCALL: Serves as a clearinghouse for information on research, resources, and trends to address the autism challenge. The center offers training, technical assistance, and consultation to build professional and program capacity to foster individual learning and growth.

Autism Safety Education and Training: ASET provides resources for families including downloadable forms and handouts about fire safety, wandering, teaching children about first responders and 911 registration forms. Autism training programs for first responders include police, fire/rescue/EMS, 911 dispatchers, as well as school systems and other interested groups. For safety tips you can use right now, see the "Autism Safety" section of this booklet. Phone: 207.415.1392; Email: nbrown623@aol.com

The Indiana Resource Center for Autism: Conducts training, consultations, engages in research and disseminates information to build local community capacity to support children and adults on the autism spectrum.

Kennebec Valley Community College: Kennebec Valley Community College offers undergraduate courses related to educating/working with children with ASD and an associate degree for applied science in autism studies. Phone: 207.453.5822



Professional Development Workshop Archives (sample)

(Note: these pages are password protected and available for free viewing upon registration)

Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research

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Speaker: Carol Gray

September 29, 2016

Workshop Description

In January of 1991, Carol Gray initiated and developed Social Stories®. Social Stories™ have helped individuals with autism of all ages understand and respond effectively to daily interactions and events. Social Stories are one of the most widely used evidence-based instructional strategies for learners with autism in the world. Unfortunately, they are also frequently misused and misunderstood. Learning how to develop and implement a Social Story is critical to its effectiveness, safety, and integrity. The goal is to build positive social concepts and skills in an individually tailored, unassuming, and supportive learning context.

Learning Outcomes

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Learning Outcomes

At the close of the workshop day, participants will be able to:

1. Outline the philosophy and research-based rationale,
2. Explain how the Social Story goal may be used to determine what is – and is not – a Social Story,
3. List the 10.2 criteria to ensure integrity and safety of every Story,
4. Define all Social Story terms,
5. Describe how research and philosophy create important ties between how a Story is researched, developed, and implemented; and
6. Write a Social Story.

Target Audience

This workshop is for anyone who is working on behalf of toddlers, children, adolescents, or adults with autism with moderate learning challenges to gifted academic ability. With slight modification, the workshop content and activities are equally valuable for those working with individuals with more severe learning challenges.

Bio: Carol Gray is a Consultant to Children, Adolescents, and Adults with Autism, providing support via workshops and presentations, information, referral, resources, and direct services for individuals with autism, their families, and professionals who work on their behalf. She is an internationally sought-after keynote and seminar speaker, and has completed over 1,000 presentations.

Carol is best known for the development of *Social Stories*, a well-respected evidence-based practice used worldwide with people with autism of all ages. Carol was the first teacher for students with autism at Jenison Public Schools in Jenison, Michigan, employed there from 1977 through 2004. In 1989, Carol began writing stories for her students to share information with them that they seemed to be missing, information that so many of us take for granted. Many of the stories resulted in immediate and marked improvement in her students' responses to daily events and interactions.

Carol is also the founder of a very effective social philosophy that 1) 'abandons all assumptions', 2) regards both the typical and autism perspective as 'equally valid', and 3) recognizes the 'social impairment in autism' as shared (noting the well-intentioned but nonetheless misguided mistakes of parents and professionals). She has completed ground breaking work on some of the toughest topics in autism by reviewing the research, outlining new theories, and developing practical instructional strategies, most

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“First Steps” Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) Training for professionals (Homepage): *(note: these pages are available only with permission)*

First Steps Training

Welcome to Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) on-line First Steps training for Early Start Maine using the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM). This on-line training was developed to build the capacity of Primary Service Providers (PSP) to implement ESDM through Child Development Services (CDS). The content of this training will provide you with a strong understanding and foundation to support your practice in this model. This is the **first step** in the training you will receive from MAIER to become an ESDM provider in the Early Start Maine program. Upon completion you will participate in a one day Fidelity training.

You are here because your supervisor has directed you to this site to begin your ESDM journey and you meet the requirements required to begin this training. If you do not have a copy of the *Early Start Denver Model for Young Children with Autism* book, it is highly recommended that you have your own copy. This book is available to order through [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). If you are unable to obtain the manual, please notify your trainer before beginning the training.

The First Steps on-line training is a guided self-study with five checkpoints after each designated section. After each section you will submit a reflection on what you have learned to the instructor and arrange a time to review each section reflection, clarify questions, and discuss content. This provides you with the time needed to complete the readings and activities at your own pace. The training will take approximately 2 weeks to complete.

Ready to Begin?

1. Contact the instructor to let her know your start date. You can do this by [email](mailto:) or by calling MAIER at 207-581-2352
2. You and the instructor will develop a plan for moving forward with dates for each section completion.

[Introduction](#)

[Section 1: Early Start Maine](#)

[Section 2: Overview of ESDM](#)

[Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities of PSP and ESDM-P](#)

[Section 4: ESDM in Practice](#)

[Section 5: Teaching Strategies](#)

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Introduction page

What is the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM)?

Developed by psychologists Geraldine Dawson, Ph.D. and Sally Rogers, Ph.D., the ESDM is an early intervention program designed to promote language, learning, and engagement for young children 12-48 months of age with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ESDM is supported by the principles of developmental psychology and applied behavior analysis (ABA). Teaching interventions are delivered within play-based, relationship-focused routines. The ESDM curriculum is designed to address all areas of the child's development using ABA based teaching strategies that involve interpersonal exchange and positive affect, shared engagement with real-life materials and activities, adult responsiveness and increasing parent sensitivity to child cues, and focus on developing the child's verbal and nonverbal communication skills.

The three primary goals of the ESDM include:

- Bringing the child into social relationships
- Following the child's lead when socially engaging the child
- Developing play activities to support a child's learning

What is Early Start Maine?

Early Start Maine is an initiative of the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research. The Early Start Maine team is comprised of nationally certified ESDM providers. In partnership with Maine Child Development Services (CDS), our team provides training, consultation, and ongoing support to early intervention providers statewide who are working with toddlers with autism.

Acronyms and terms to know:

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