

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Education

Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities

11-2015

Autism in Rural Areas: Lessons in Montana

Martin E. Blair

University of Montana, Missoula

Ann N. Garfinkle

University of Montana - Missoula

University of Montana Rural Institute

scholarworks-reports@mso.umt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/ruralinst_education



Part of the [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Blair, M. & Garfinkle, A. (November 2015). Autism in Rural Areas: Lessons in Montana. Poster presented at the Association of University Centers on Disabilities Meeting and Conference. Washington, D.C.

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Education by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

Autism in Rural Areas: Lessons we have learned in Montana



- Social media and Facebook are a great way to share information and build community. Texting has not been as beneficial.
- Churches, bowling alleys and bars are good points of contact in rural and remote areas.
- Indian Health Service provides an effective connection to tribal communities.
- Local newsletters and Chamber of Commerce/community websites are good avenues for building resource awareness.

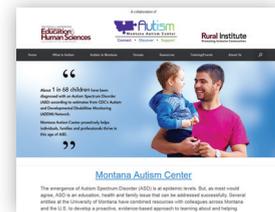
Fast Facts:

- In 8 years, preschool age referrals are up 100%. For school age, referrals are up 150%, mostly in western MT.
- One urban Part C provider currently serves 125 families, 38% screen positive for ASD.
- “Youth Engagement through Intervention” for school age children grew from 8 to 17 children in one year. “MOSSAIC” grew from 4 to 7 young adults.
- The largest youth/adult provider in central Montana has 100 open Direct Service Providers positions.

Text4Baby Connections (text4baby.org)

- ACL American Indian Outreach coordinator to improve Native American connections.
- Overview for State ASD team members.

The Montana Autism Center provides practical assistance such as demonstrating proven techniques and training direct service staff.



MT Autism Center

- 1,337 unique visitors with 6,401 page views in 6 months (no advertising).
- The center is about “function,” not “place.”
- Center resources available “on demand.”

Training & Research

- Training to 38 “very satisfied” Early Head Start providers across Montana. Six of 10 Early Head Start programs were represented.
- On-going training to Part C staff in central and eastern Montana (with Act Early Ambassador)
- UC Davis and a Montana team to implement the Early Start Denver Model project. Research sites include several Part C providers.
- Online training about early screening is co-developed with Part C.
- State ASD Plan development with 56 stakeholders across Montana.



“Act Early” Resources

- CDC LTSAE customized brochure (trifold) 4,300.
- CDC LTSAE customized booklet (48 page) 800.

