

Autism Grant Newsletter



Community Corner

Dakota County

“Pop Up” Resource Fairs

Information on early childhood, mental health and many other topics for residents visiting Dakota County

Norther Service Center-Atrium

1 Mendota Road, West St. Paul 55118

- 4/13/17

Western Service Center-Atrium

14955 Galaxie Avenue, Apple Valley

- 4/6/17
- 4/20/17
- 4/27/17

Autism Speaks

Community Meeting on how organization is growing in new ways to support individuals with autism and families across the life span

When: April 4th, from 6-8pm

Where: University of St. Thomas
MOH 201 (Minneapolis Opus Hall)
1000 LeSalle Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Arc Greater Twin Cities

Myths and Facts about Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA)

When: April 25th, from 6:30-8pm

Where: Dakota County NSC

1 Mendota Road, West St. Paul 55118

To register, please visit:

<https://arcgreatertwincities.org/event/wioa-weststpaul/>

The events listed are intended to provide users with a point of reference and are not an endorsement by Dakota County. If you would like to submit an educational or advocacy event, contact Evan at evan.henspeter@co.dakota.mn.org

What's Been Happening?

Happy spring! Things continue to move forward with the ASD Grant. We are officially accepting applications for individual and family grants. So far, we have approved five applications and received inquiries from many others. As a reminder of the guidelines, individuals must be a resident of Dakota or Ramsey County and have a diagnosis of autism or a related condition to qualify. Below are some examples of services and supports the grant may fund:

- Caregiver relief services (licensed or unlicensed)
- Community engagement activities, such as adaptive recreation, social clubs, etc.
- Services or items to support community integration and valued social roles
- Person-centered planning and navigation services to determine individual options for community integration
- Training for family caretakers or other providers to better support individuals with ASD or similar support needs

If you or anyone you know are interested in applying for an individual grant here is the link:

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/HealthFamily/MentalHealth/Autism/Pages/default.aspx>

Dakota County recently requested Letters of Interest (LOI) from organizations to provide new or expanded community integration and caregiver relief services for people with autism and related conditions. In total, we received 39 program concepts from 19 organizations. A review committee is currently evaluating responses and selecting organizations for contracts. We plan to share more information about the organizations selected and services that will soon be available in our next update.

Finally, the grant workgroups are now wrapping up but we plan to keep their momentum going through a larger “Innovations Group” being formed. The purpose of this group is to bring together various stakeholders – including self-advocates, family members, organizations serving people with autism, policy makers, etc. – to share best practices and discuss opportunities to collaborate across disciplines in support of people with autism. If you are interested in joining the innovation group or to learn more about it, contact Ericka at Ericka.Johnson@co.dakota.mn.us

What's Coming Up Next?

In the near future, we will offer expanded training opportunities for organizations and individuals supporting people with autism. Training topics will include: best practices for supporting people with autism, including people with dual diagnoses; providing culturally competent services; and importance of respite as a service and process to become 245D licensed. If you or someone you know is interested in training in any of the above areas, please contact Evan or Ericka.

Starting next month our newsletter will have a new look! With our growing list of newsletter recipients, we are starting a “listserv” where people can sign up on our website to receive updates. If you already on our list, you don’t need to do anything. One exciting change to highlight is that with the new format we will begin sharing success stories from the community. Stay tuned!

Question for Consideration

Are there changes in county or state policy/ practice that could improve support for individuals with autism and their families?