

**Regional Autism Assistance Program  
Expert Panel Advisory Committee Meeting  
April 26, 2022, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30  
Via Zoom**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization/Role Representing</b>	<b>Present</b>
Alyson Beytien	Life Connections/Family Member	
Josh Cobbs	Family Advisor	X
Samantha Cermak	ChildServe	
Connie Fanselow	Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services Commission	X
Candice Fedeler	Metro West Learning Center	X
Erika Hertel	Iowa Regional Autism Assistance Program/Family Member	X
Michelle Holst	Iowa Department of Public Health- 1st Five	X
Evelyn Horton	Balance Autism	x
Bridget Konz	Iowa Department of Public Health	
Aaron Kauer	UI Stead Family Children's Hospital Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	X
Andrea Keith	Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services	X
Lisa Kemmerer	Star Autism Support	X
Vanessa Kimm	Family Advisor	
Todd Kopelman	UI Stead Family Children's Hospital Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	X
Toni Fuller Merfeld	Metro West Learning Center	
Stacie Lane	Tanager Place	
Steve Muller	Balance Autism—	X
Michelle Nuehring	Grant Wood AEA	
Kelly Pelzel	UI Stead Family Children's Hospital Autism Center	X
Mary Roberts	Family Advisor	
Leslie Rogers	ChildServe	
Thomas Scholz	Division of Child & Community Health	X
Kristine Steinmetz	Autism Society of Iowa/Family Member	X
Rachell Swanson-Holm	Learn the Signs. Act Early.,Regional Autism Assistance Program	X
Wendy Trotter	Iowa Department of Education	
Maria Valdovinos	Drake University	X
Brad Zelinger	Stride Autism Centers	X

**Welcome and Introductions**

Facilitator: Erika Hertel

- Roll call was taken, and introductions were made.

**Member Updates:**

**Steve Muller, Evelyn Horton-Balance Autism**, Legislative update. The Glenwood Resource Center will close with the last of the residents move to another placement by June 30, 2024. Steve had nothing but praise for Medicaid director Garcia for making this decision. This decision has needed to be made for a long time. Woodward will continue to operate. There has been an influx of state cash for community based resource centers to use as retention or hiring bonuses to help with the severe

labor shortage.

Evelyn spoke about proposed rule allowing registered behavior technicians to deliver applied behavior analysis (ABA) services under the direct supervision of behavior analysts or assistant behavior analysts. This would provide an alternative to the current bachelor's degree requirement.

Registered Behavior Technician certification vs a bachelor's degree. The proposed new rule:

A person is eligible to participate as a registered behavior technician when the person holds:

- (1) A current certification from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board as a registered behavior technician; or
- (2) A bachelor's degree in education, psychology, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy or speech language pathology.

It would have been preferred to remove the degree categories from the proposal, but it has been stated that exceptions are a possibility.

No effective date has been set when this certification will be available, but the rule is up for public comment: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/6300C.pdf>.

Any interested person may submit written comments concerning this proposed rule-making. Written comments in response to this rule making must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on May 10, 2022. Comments should be directed to:

Nancy Freudenberg  
Department of Human Services  
Hoover State Office Building, Fifth Floor  
1305 East Walnut Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114  
Email: [appeals@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:appeals@dhs.state.ia.us)

**Tom Scholz** interjected another legislative update is that a concern has come up following the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) alignment and integration of programs. The house budget bill does not include the IDPH line items that had been detailed in the past, including funding for the Iowa Regional Autism Assistance Program. Tom stated we must be vigilant with our legislators to keep the line item funding intact for programs like RAP and others.

Iowa Health and Human Services Alignment

[https://hhsalignment.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/2022-03/IA\\_HHS\\_Alignment\\_Final\\_Change\\_Package\\_FINAL.pdf](https://hhsalignment.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/2022-03/IA_HHS_Alignment_Final_Change_Package_FINAL.pdf)

### **Maria Valdovinos-Drake University Applied Behavior Analysis Program**

Maria received notice from the provost that the Drake University Applied Behavior Analysis Program will close and no online classes will be offered. They will complete the current cohort; however, one faculty has already left for another job opportunity. It is such a shame as they had 75 applicants for the next term with no advertisement.

Iowa Public Radio is working on a story on this topic with input from area providers. Update- the story was released on 4/28/2022 <https://www.iowapublicradio.org/ipr-news/2022-04-28/providers-for-iowans-with-autism-are-concerned-their-education-opportunities-will-be-even-more-limited>

### **Kelly Pelzel- University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Autism Center**

Kelly has completed her coursework to become an IMPACT trainer and she held her first training with about 13 people earning 20 hours of IMPACT training. Kelly plans to offer training once per year going forward.

The Autism Basics webinar series gathered many registrants from out of state and even outside of the

United States, (it was something of a fluke). This has also brought in many family navigator requests for children living in other states.

What suggestions does the group have for resources to offer the families that we cannot serve? Discussion of national groups to refer to included: Autism Society, Family Voices, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Department of Education website.

Another question that arose is whether to offer the webinar to a broader audience or keep it to Iowa residents only? Kelly and Erika proposed keeping the series focused on Iowa, and not turning anyone away, but making it clear that some topics discussed will be specific to Iowa. Many of the panel thought it would be good to keep registration open to participants from Iowa and beyond to help promote what we are doing in Iowa, with a disclaimer that services and supports discussed may be for Iowa residents only.

**Rachell Swanson-Holm-Child Health Specialty Clinics (CHSC), Learn the Signs. Act Early.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) developmental milestones and parent tips have been updated and new checklist ages have been added (15 and 30 months). Learn the Signs. Act Early. materials have been revised to reflect these changes. Slides are attached.



LTSAE Milestone  
Updates\_Expert Pan

“Evidence-Informed Milestones for Developmental Surveillance Tools”

<https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2021-052138>

**Erika Hertel- Iowa Regional Autism Assistance Program**

Input requested on what else Child Health Specialty Clinics and RAP can do to help support families and providers as wait times for evaluations and services continue to grow.

**Next Meeting:** The meeting schedule for fiscal year 2023 will be shared soon.