Indiana Resource Center for Autism  
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community  

Application 2013-2014  
Professional Development on Evidence-Based Practices in Autism Spectrum Disorders  

During the past 5 years, IRCA staff have worked intensely in 28 different school districts in the state. As this work has progressed, the goals of this project have evolved as well. Through this project, IRCA staff can work in districts to achieve the following outcomes:

- Work with the existing autism team to strengthen their ability to implement evidence-based practices in schools. Many of you have trained multiple teams, and they are in various stages of activity or non-activity. This project can extend and build upon the autism team training.

- Conduct training of both general and special educators to facilitate implementation of project goals and implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity.

- Work within a school to create a demonstration site that others can visit to see evidence-based practices implemented with fidelity and with a focus on student outcomes.

- Development of a plan that includes a combination of the activities listed above with a focus also on helping those students who present the greatest challenges. Assistance with the development of an ongoing district plan to expand and sustain efforts.

The ultimate goal of this project is to work in collaboration with schools and/or districts to create sustainable change using coaching and training strategies. Schools/districts receive support in implementing evidence-based practices (EBP) with fidelity and with a focus on student outcomes. Unintended outcomes of this project have been that practices focused on students on the autism spectrum have been universally-adopted in some places to benefit all students (universal design), and strategies have been used to promote educating students in general education.
settings alongside non-disabled peers (inclusion). This project has strengthened districts efforts around RTI and School-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBIS) as well.

This application is to articulate the expectations of participation in this project and to highlight what will be provided through the Indiana Resource Center for Autism. Again, this project is based on the work of the National Professional Development Center in Autism Spectrum Disorders, an OSEP project. The following criteria will be looked at when selecting sites:

- An autism leader or some other key personnel should be involved who is able to schedule a day monthly to work with an IRCA staff member on activities of the project. The person may also need to devote additional time between monthly visits to any related issues that arise (e.g., to talk with a teacher in more depth about a strategy that the teacher is struggling to implement). An important goal is to coach the autism leader or other key personnel in implementing evidence-based practices (EBP’s). In addition, general and/or special education administrative support/involvement is critical in facilitating change.

- If the goal is to create a demonstration site, then a school needs to be identified to work on the goals of the project. There must be a willingness and commitment of the building level administrator and educators to assist with project goals and activities. Experience has also taught us that it is best to select a school where there is not great resistance to change. Change may look like changing the physical structure of a classroom, implementing visual supports or strategies, developing new ways to take data, working collaboratively with a team, and many others ideas related to the EBP’s. It will be important for those involved to have an open mind to new ways of implementing practices they may have been doing for years.

- If the goal is to work with specific, students, identification of students on the autism spectrum who will be the focus for the project. These do not have to be identified prior to the application. Based on these students, staff learns strategies that can benefit others as well. However, these students are the source for accountability to you.

- Using an established autism team or creating one within the building/district to support the staff working with the students on the autism spectrum. This
team might consist of an OT, SLP, school counselor, chairperson, administrator, general education teacher, or other interested staff. In order for the autism team to learn about the EBP's, it is important they are included at some point in the coaching day as a group to brainstorm, create, and implement ideas.

- Online modules are available on autism spectrum disorder. IRCA staff has found it helpful for those involved to complete the 8 sessions about the evidence-based practices being promoted.

Here is what you can expect from staff from the Indiana Resource Center for Autism:

- You will be assigned an IRCA staff member who will come into your district for one day each month. Based on the needs of the district, your students and the skills staff need to implement evidence-based practices, coaching, training, modeling and/or observation will occur during the day. During this day, IRCA staff members will meet with the team as a group to discuss issues and progress, and to provide training. The team including the autism consultant will follow through with the strategies created based on the EBP's during the month. The IRCA staff member can be reached via email or phone as an advisor as issues arise.

- If requested, assistance with assessing (using an assessment based on evidence-based practices) the classroom(s) environments within the targeted school in preparation for assisting the autism leader to define key goals and practices to be implemented. This can be done in the fall and spring.

- If requested, assistance with development of student goals that can be used to measure progress of the project.

- During the monthly visit, the IRCA staff member in conjunction with the school staff will also be available to talk with parents to explain project goals and outcomes.

- At least nine (once a month) coaching and technical assistance visits in implementing evidence-based practices. **Other tasks can be negotiated throughout the project.**
Resources Available:

- Access to modules developed by the National Professional Development Center on autism spectrum disorders for all staff from the school.

- Online workshop that can be taken in three different ways: 1. Online (free) working at one’s own pace; 2. Online (for a small fee) with pre/post-tests to receive a certificate for professional growth points; 3. Online for graduate credit with completion of an extra project.

The total cost for participation for new schools is $10,000. This includes travel, accommodations, materials, and staff time during and outside the visit. In other words, this covers all associated costs for the project. For individual and specific schools in the second year of the project, the cost is $7500. For schools that have been previously involved with the project and may need only some minor help, the cost is $5000 for visits every other month. Select level of service option you are applying for:

- New school (monthly visits and $10,000 fee).
- School that has already participated (monthly visits and $7500 fee).
- School that has already participated and requires less intense support (visits every other month and $5000 fee).

The application should be completed and returned to Cathy Pratt via email (prattc@indiana.edu) or fax at 1-812-855-9630 by July 1, 2012. If this timelines does not work, please email about interest so staff assignments can be determined.
# Application

**Professional Development on Evidence-Based Practices in Autism Spectrum Disorders**

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<td><strong>Autism Leader/Contact Information</strong></td>
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Have you read and understand the expectations of the project? ________________

If not, what other information do you need? ________________________________

What are your goals for our involvement? ________________________________

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