

Possibilities

in Education and Training

Spring 2020



Iowa's Money Follows the Person Program: Bringing People Home

By Mike Hoenig, *Project Director, Conner Training Connection*



Lindsey Robertson, Iowa Money Follows the Person (MFP) Operations Manager

For the past five years, *Possibilities* has featured the stories of Money Follows the Person (MFP) participants who have transitioned from congregate to community-based settings. In this issue, I sit down with Operations Manager Lindsey Robertson to discuss MFP basics, history and milestones.

“MFP is a Medicaid program,” Lindsey explains. “In order to qualify, individuals must be Medicaid eligible, meet level of care criteria for either the Intellectual Disability (ID) or Brain Injury (BI) waiver, and have lived in a “qualifying facility” for 90 consecutive days. Qualifying facilities include Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF’s/ID), Nursing Facilities, hospitals, or Psychiatric Mental Institutes for Children (PMIC’s). Once participants have moved, they may stay on the program for up to 365 days during which time they receive intensive support from MFP transition specialists. 771 individuals have transitioned to community settings since the program began in 2008.”

“MFP was originally scheduled to sunset (end) in 2019. Therefore, we stopped taking referrals on October 1, 2018. We continued to provide services to program participants in the interim.”

“In early 2019, we received funding through the Medicaid Extenders Act to continue the program.

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MFP participants Ashly, Max, and Kelly enjoy the personal freedom that comes from living on their own.

Though we were not allowed to take new referrals, we could serve individuals who'd been previously referred. We supported 14 individuals to move in 2019, including four Woodward Resource Center (WRC) residents who had been eligible for almost a decade. We attribute these placements to consumer growth, increased community capacity, and the partnership which we have established with WRC social workers to locate providers able to meet consumer needs."

"In January 2020, we were able to open the referral process once again. We've already taken 50 referrals, with 7 individuals transitioning to the community. We're working closely with Iowa's Resource Centers and Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCO's) to utilize existing resources and create new tools to facilitate transition."

We reported on one such "tool," the Community Ambassadors, in our last quarterly issue. Five of the six Ambassadors successfully transitioned

from congregate to community settings, while the sixth is a parent whose daughter achieved this accomplishment. The Ambassadors presented to receptive audiences at both Resource Centers and have since been asked to share their stories at state-level meetings.

"We are continuing to look at transitioning individuals with everything going on in the world," Lindsey concluded. "We're taking things on a case by case basis."

As project director of the Conner Training Connection, an annual state appropriation which supplements MFP funding to support community transition, I am fortunate to work with Lindsey and the four transition specialists who serve consumers across the state. The program is in extremely capable hands. I urge all of you to respond to requests to support and continue this invaluable program in the weeks and months ahead.

Autism Awareness Month

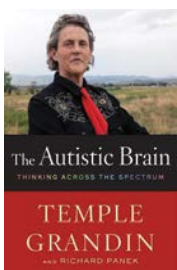
Mitch DeFauw, *Disability Resource Librarian*

The DRL takes pride in its available resources, providing books for both adults and children, as well as DVDs for both education and entertainment. The books listed below are a sample of the autism related material available for check out at the library.

If you have any questions, please contact Mitch DeFauw at mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu. To find out more about the DRL, you can visit: <http://uichildrens.org/cdd/drl>, or search the online catalog at <http://uichildrens.org/drl-catalog>.

The Autistic Brain- Thinking Across the Spectrum

by Temple Grandin



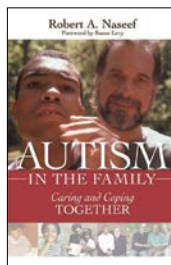
“Temple Grandin may be the most famous person with autism, a condition that affects 1 in 88 children. Since her birth in 1947, our understanding of it has undergone a great transformation, leading to more hope than ever before that we may finally learn the causes of and treatments for autism.

“Weaving her own experience with remarkable new discoveries, Grandin introduces the advances in neuroimaging and genetic research that link brain science to behavior, even sharing her own brain scan to show which anomalies might explain common symptoms. Most excitingly, she argues that raising and educating kids on the autism spectrum must focus on their

long-overlooked strengths to foster their unique contributions. The Autistic Brain brings Grandin’s singular perspective into the heart of the autism revolution.”

Autism in the Family- Caring and Coping Together

by Robert A. Naseef

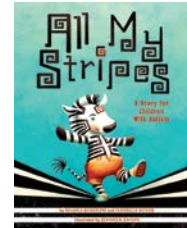


“How can parents provide the best support for their child with autism—and ensure that the whole family’s needs are met?

It’s a question faced by every parent of a child on the autism spectrum, and this book answers it with keen insight, reassuring honesty, and practical guidance. A psychologist and father of an adult son with autism, Dr. Robert Naseef has both personal and professional expertise to share with overwhelmed families.”

All my Stripes- a Story for Children with Autism

by Shaina Rudolph and Danielle Royer; illustrated by Jennifer Zivojn



“In All My Stripes, Zane the zebra feels different from the rest of his classmates.

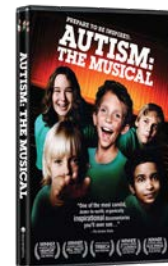
He worries that all they notice about him is his “autism stripe.” With the help of his Mama, Zane comes to appreciate all his stripes—the unique strengths that make him who he is!

“Includes a Reading Guide with additional background information about autism spectrum disorders and a Note to Parents and Caregivers with tips for finding support.”

Prepare to be Inspired.

Autism: The Musical (DVD)

by Bunim-Murray Productions



“Autism: The Musical follows five children with autism, their parents, and their extraordinary acting coach as they improbably and heroically mount a full-length original stage production. Through trial and error, tears and laughter, these incredible families learn to communicate their feelings in song and performance, finding solace and joy in the act of creating”.

AUTISM- Asserting Your Child's Right to a Special Education

by David A. Sherman

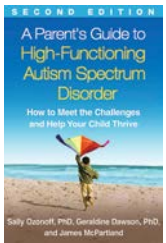


“This book provides a comprehensive, but easy to read guide to the law and strategies to attain a free appropriate

special education for your child. Asserting your child's legal rights and strategies are explained in clear and easy to understand language.”

A Parent's Guide to High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder, Second Edition: How to Meet the Challenges and Help your Child Thrive

by Sally Ozonoff, Geraldine Dawson, and James C. McPartland

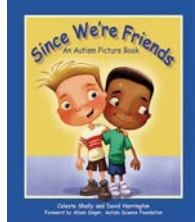


“This is an excellent resource for parents, providers and therapists of children with Asperger syndrome and high

functioning autism. Includes advice to parents focusing on understanding individual strengths and weaknesses. Vivid stories and real-world examples illustrate ways to help kids with ASD relate more comfortably to peers, learn the rules of appropriate behavior, and succeed in school. You'll learn how ASD is diagnosed and what treatments and educational supports really work.

Since We're Friends - an Autism Picture Book

by Celeste Shally and David Harrington



“Matt's autism doesn't keep him from having fun! Even when he struggles in social situations, his

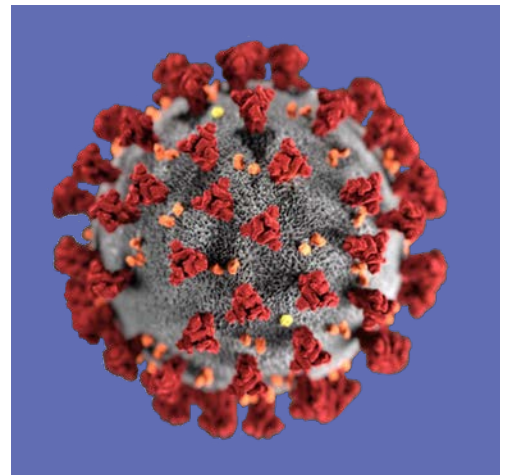
friend is there to help him out. The two boys love playing sports watching movies, reading books, and talking about animals. By working together, a best friend's understanding and compassion change Matt's frustration into excitement. No matter where they go, the two friends enjoy spending time with each other.”

Leah's Voice by Lori DeMonia; Illustrated by Monique Turchan



“Leah's Voice is a story that touches on the difficulties children encounter when

they meet a child with special needs such as autism. Children who have a brother or sister with special needs may find it difficult to explain to their friends, or feel disappointed when their friends aren't more understanding. Leah's Voice tells the story of two sisters facing these challenges. Through her kindness and devotion, one sister teaches by example the importance of including everyone and showing acceptance.”



New Coronavirus Resources Available from the Conner Training Connection

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating a variety of challenges unique to individuals with disabilities and their families.

The **Conner Training Connection** has compiled two resources that target multiple audiences, including individuals with disabilities and their families, health care providers, and first responders.

View the site's dedicated page entitled “COVID-19 Response and Resources” at <http://www.disabilitytraining.org/resources/covid-19-response-and-resources/>.

Additional resources focusing primarily on children are listed on the site's **What's New** post. Check back periodically for updates.

Possibilities in Education and Training is a quarterly publication of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. It is an outreach initiative of the Conner Training Connection, a program funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to support the transition of individuals with disabilities from congregate to community-based settings.

We aren't handicapped in any way except by what other people think.

-Marlee Matlin

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