

RPATS:  
Regional Program Autism Training  
Site Project  
(2003-present)

A collaboration between the Oregon  
Department of Education, Regional  
Programs, School Districts and Portland  
State University

# RPATS STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS

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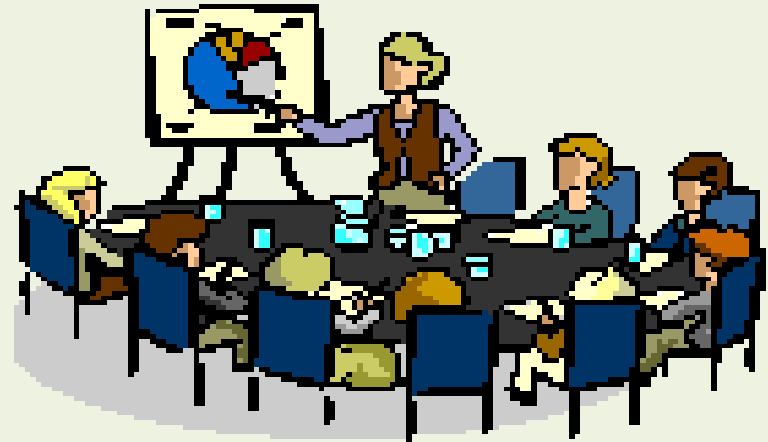
# What is the RPATS Project?

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- PSU & ODE are providing comprehensive workshops and extensive on-site “hands-on” training in research based instructional strategies to training site staff and autism specialists
- Centers will model appropriate curriculum content using behavioral methods and provide training on these research based practices
- Autism specialists will provide hands-on training to other educators in their region at the training sites

# History of RPATS: (Regional Program Autism Training Sites) Task Force Recommendations July 2000 (SB 765)

- Task force recommends that the state establish an Autism Development Center (external to the ODE)
- Legislative Task Force recommends multiple training centers in 8 statewide regions
- Sites to provide a “model” demonstration program, training opportunities, and resources
- Based on the literature and Oregon Outcome Study Results, use of a curriculum emphasizing behavioral methods of instruction



# Curriculum for EI/ECSE and Elementary Level RPATS Sites

- Learning to communicate, understand language and social skills is the focus.
- Generalizing skills within functional routines at home and school is important.
- STAR Autism Program (Strategies for Teaching based-on Autism Research, Arick, et.al 2004) is used to teach skills.
  - STAR uses the strategies of DT/PRT/FR to teach in the six curriculum areas.
- Parent Training is important. Parent training component is being implemented at the sites.

# Research Indicates that Education For Young Children Should:

Provide 1:1 intensive instruction in:

- Expressive language
- Receptive language
- Spontaneous Communication
- Pre-academics
- Play skills/Social Interaction and
- Pre-Teach Functional routines

THEN

Generalize the skills taught into the child's school day and at home

*Research Also Says that Effective Instructional Strategies to Teach this Content are the Applied Behavioral Analysis Strategies of:*

- Discrete Trial Training
- Pivotal Response Training
- Functional Routines

# Curriculum for: Middle and High School Students

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- Independence is key
- School and Community Routines become more of a focus
- Social Skill Development is also a priority
- Continue to use ABA strategies to teach specific skills needed for independence on routines
- Generalize skills within routines
- FACTER Program (Arick, Nave, Hoffman, 2004)

# Establishing an RPATS Site: The Training Sequence conducted by PSU

## **All staff program training**

- 2-3 days of workshops focusing on methods, curriculum and behavior
- 1-2 days of program set-up and practice
- 5-7 days of hands-on training at the site (over the course of 3-5 months)

## **Training of trainers and initial use of the RPATS site**

- 2 days of training at the RPATS site (1<sup>st</sup> teacher to be trained)
- 2 days of training at a new site - the “to be trained” teacher’s site

## **Autism Specialists Role**

- Participated in all training and assisted PSU staff
- Lead role during “trainer of trainers” phase along with PSU staff

# RPATS Training Process

## (For Staff Wanting Training)

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- Attend workshops in behavioral methods, including DT, PRT, and Routines
- Receive training and practice at the RPATS training site from regional autism specialist and RPATS teacher
- RPATS staff will assist with student/classroom program set-up
- RPATS staff will provide follow-up support to trainees at their school site

# RPATS Parent Training and Information Component

- Parent training component for parents of children in EI/ECSE (Implementing in all 8 regions by 2009)
  - Evening parent workshop series
  - On-site parent 1:1 coaching
  - Focus on facilitating communication and generalization of skills using PRT techniques
- Parent Information component for parents of elementary age children (Piloting 07-09)
  - “How To” packets
  - Parent information sessions to show how to use packets

# RPATS Project Goals

## Completed: 2003-2007

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- Increased statewide capacity
- Developed 20 new Regional Training Centers
  - EI/ECSE Training Centers (11)
  - Elementary Training Centers (7)
  - Piloted 2 Middle School Training Centers (2)
- Developed a Regional Autism Specialist Training Cadre equipped to extend state provided training and follow-up to a broader audience within each region
- Conducted on-going evaluation of RPATS Model
  - Student pre-post progress data
  - Participant interviews
  - Parent surveys
  - RPATS sites reviewed
  - Training evaluations

# RPATS GOALS for 2007-2009

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- Maintain the existing 32 RPATS sites
- Develop 19 new training sites over the two years
- Train at least one autism specialist to serve as the “trainer of others” for each new training site
- Expand the middle school sites and evaluate model
- Expand the parent training pilot project to the EI/ECSE sites and evaluate model
- Pilot a parent information component for elementary sites
- Continue to evaluate student progress and review data for factors that may improve implementation

# Project Evaluation

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- **Student outcome data pre/post**
  - Curriculum based assessment
  - Standardized assessment
  - Parent survey of child progress
- **Survey Data**
  - Administrator
  - Autism Specialist
  - Teacher
- **RPATS Program Standards data pre/post**
  - Teacher
  - Autism Specialist
  - Instructional Assistants

# RPATS FUTURE VISION

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- **AUTISM DISSEMINATION/DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
(with stable funding)
- **REGIONAL TRAINING SITES:**
  - AVAILABLE FOR EVERY AGE LEVEL (EI/ECSE/ELEM/MID/HS)
  - AVAILABLE TO ALL GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS NEEDED
  - Hands-on Training provided at Training Sites
  - Follow-up Support provided at your local site
  - Funding to maintain the existing RPATS sites and to expand RPATS sites
- **AUTISM SPECIALISTS TRAINED AS “TRAINERS”**
- **TRAINING SITES AND RELEASE TIME AVAILABLE FOR LEA STAFF WHO NEED TO LEARN TO WORK WITH CHILDREN WITH AUTISM**
- **PARENT INFORMATION AND TRAINING AVAILABLE AT EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT**
- **ALL CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN OREGON RECEIVE AN APPROPRIATE PROGRAM**
  - Funding to ensure appropriate hours of instruction is obtained (e.g. EI/ECSE especially needs additional funds to provide more hours of instruction).

## **HOW TO OBTAIN RPATS TRAINING FOR YOUR STAFF?**

School districts can access RPATS training by contacting their Regional Autism Coordinator.

See the RPATS website map for contact information.