



Maine Autism Institute
for Education and Research

**Quarterly Report of Progress
Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER)
Submitted for July 2016 - October 2016**

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) is a partnership of the University of Maine and the Maine Department of Education. MAIER was established at the University of Maine in 2014 to build statewide capacity to improve outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) through leadership, training, professional development, collaboration, and research.

During this academic year, MAIER will host 10 professional development opportunities for educators, provide in-depth training to paraprofessionals working with students with ASD, host family events through “Our Day to Play” opportunities, support the campus student group “Autism at UMaine” with their parent panel and student events, develop and distribute relevant resources to families and professionals, and offer three graduate level courses in ASD.

Please visit our website to learn more about our work and opportunities: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/>



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Deliverables:

MAIER will deliver quarterly electronic reports to the Department describing the progress, barriers and status of preparing individuals to support students with ASD:

and 1.1.2

A minimum of 10 professional development opportunities are schedule this academic year. The following information will be provided to the Department each quarter. Recipients of MAIER services by topic and by type of service provided and the type of participants, and the dates,
Workshop/training handouts/agendas,
Electronic copies of resources developed and distributed,
Number of college credits or contact hours awarded for each relevant professional development event, and the number of individuals receiving the credits or contact hours during the reporting period.

Date	Topic	Type	# of Participants	Contact hours or credits awarded
Summer semester, May-August 2016	SED 563: Positive Behavioral Supports for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Graduate level course as part of the Graduate Certificate in ASD	23 students representing various master's level programs including special education, communication sciences and disorders, the graduate certificate in ASD, and students not yet enrolled in a degree program	3 credit hours awarded upon successful completion of the course
September 29, 2015	MAIER PD Kickoff 2015: Social Stories 2.0 with Carol Gray	Professional development – Brewer – Jeff's Catering	178 participants	6 contact hours awarded or .6 CEUs if requested



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Please note that the file for handouts September 29, 2016 PD were very large – we did not print these for participants, but rather provided an electronic link to access:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B0K8lkVxYV0vYWVpZ2V0MVRpWWc?usp=sharing>

1.1.3

This deliverable has been postponed until spring 2017. MAIER received 3 applications by school districts interested in Maine Autism Leader Team training. The preparation and cost of this training would have outweighed the benefits for these 3 teams. Applications have been revised with new dates and MAIER continues to advertise this opportunity. The Provider contacted Jan Breton about this barrier to training new leader teams, and Jan approved using this training funding to support current leader teams, provide on-site training as requested by schools, and develop trainings and resources for paraprofessionals. All trainings will be pre-approved by the Department prior to implementing to ensure agreement in outcomes.

1.1.4

Coaching continues this year for leader teams trained in 2015-2016. An update on coaching efforts will be provided in the December quarterly report.

1.1.5

Webinar content and materials are currently in the planning stages.



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Deliverables:

MAIER will deliver quarterly electronic reports to the Department describing the progress, barriers and status of the MAIER Advisory Committee (MAC), including results of semi-annual review of MAIER's work, and review of course syllabi.

Members have been invited to join the MAIER Advisory Council. The first council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 6, 2016, 9:30 on the UMaine campus.

1.2.1

Members will be informed of the work and mission of MAIER and facilitate MAC's work in supporting and informing MAIER's work.

1.2.2

MAIER will provide the Department a membership list following the first meeting.

1.2.3

MAC will meet semi-annually to review syllabi, survey data from PD opportunities, qualitative data about coaching efforts for leader teams, fidelity of implementation of EBPs through the work of leader teams, and review self-assessment program data completed by SAUs and leader teams.



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Deliverables:

MAIER will deliver quarterly electronic reports to the Department describing the progress, barriers and status of the products developed and disseminated through MAIER.

1.3.1 and 1.3.2

The MAIER public website is updated weekly to include information about autism, a calendar of events, news, and evidence-based resources, including interactive resources, webinars, video and audio clips, and resources for leader teams:

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/>

An electronic copy of our brochures for MAIER and the MAIER Family Partnership are found on our website under the About Us tab and the Family Partnership tab.

MAIER's Maine Family Partnership (MFP) is dedicated to providing outreach to individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders across the state of Maine. Together, MAIER staff and families work to identify issues of concern for Maine families and collaborate on projects to promote greater awareness and understanding, develop tools and resources, address access to services, and support research efforts. In addition, the MAIER MFP hosts educational and social events to offer families valuable information and resources, strengthen community ties, and encourage family-to-family networking and support. Download the [brochure](#) (left) for more information. Individuals with autism, parents and family members, and caregivers are welcome to join the MFP.

MFP hosted a "Our Day to Play" at York's Wild Kingdom on September 17, 2016. Read more about the event:

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/mfp-events/> Important to note, 13 of 16 counties in Maine were represented by the families that attended this southern Maine event.

Our next event is scheduled for December 4, 2016 and is in partnership with the Maine Discovery Museum

<https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/maine-family-partnership/>

We continue to distribute MAIER's [Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders](#), which is available online and in print. This parent-friendly guide, a "roadmap" of sorts, was developed to assist families as they navigate the autism journey. In three



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booklets, the *Parent Guide* leads families from the initial question of “Does my child have autism?” to steps for obtaining needed assessments, connecting with educational and social services, and finding resources based on their needs. It includes an in-depth description of early childhood and special education services in Maine, a guide for transitioning from high school to adult services, and a Resource Guide that includes contact information for many services and supports across the state. The *Maine Parent Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders* is enriched with personal stories, reflections, and suggestions from our parent group, lending a personal touch that reflects their experiences and knowledge gained from their own journeys. Family photos capture the joys and challenges of raising a child with ASD.

Since July 1, 2016, we have distributed 401 sets of Parent Guides. This includes the following:

- MAIER was represented at the Aroostook County Autism Conference on October 7, 2017 and 54 sets of Parent Guides were distributed to families.
- 70 sets were distributed at the Our Day to Play event York Wild Kingdom.
- The Autism Society of Maine, Maine Medical Partners in Portland, Bridges to Success in Norway, Maine Parent Federation, and Edmund Erwin Pediatric Center in Augusta were provided the remaining guides, between 50 and 100 sets each.

1.3.3

Our newsletter Pathways is scheduled to be published November 7, 2016. Pathways is disseminated through our professional and family databases and our MAIER website. Our membership in the family database reached 338 families in September. Current membership in the professional database exceeds 1200.

1.3.4

The comprehensive, annotated and interactive online resource directory to identify local services and supports representing Maine’s service systems is complete and available here: <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/resources/> Click on each of the boxes to expand the resource category; click on each resource to expand the information.

1.3.5 and 1.3.6

The Roadmap to Services is in the planning stages and will be available by March 2016 as a published brochure and an online resource.



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Additional Information related to the work of MAIER:

Early Start Maine <https://umaine.edu/autisminstitute/about-us/early-start-maine/>

In partnership with Maine Child Development Services, MAIER works to build sustainability for the training and professional development of primary service providers to improve Maine’s ability to deliver necessary and highly effective services to young children with autism spectrum disorders.

Developed by psychologists Geraldine Dawson, Ph.D. and Sally Rogers, Ph.D., the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) is an early intervention program designed to promote language, learning, and engagement for young children 12-48 months of age with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ESDM is supported by the principles of developmental psychology and applied behavior analysis (ABA). Teaching interventions are delivered within play-based, relationship-focused routines. The ESDM curriculum is designed to address all areas of the child’s development using ABA based teaching strategies that involve interpersonal exchange and positive affect, shared engagement with real-life materials and activities, adult responsiveness and increasing parent sensitivity to child cues, and focus on developing the child’s verbal and nonverbal communication skills.

The three primary goals of the ESDM include:

1. Bringing the child into social relationships,
2. Following the child’s lead when socially engaging the child, and
3. Developing play activities to support a child’s learning.

The Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research (MAIER) has on staff five ESDM certified providers.

ESDM by the Numbers

# Children currently served	# Children exited program (aged out)	Total # children served to date	# Primary Service Providers (PSPs) trained and active	# PSPs earned Maine fidelity of implementation
43	27	70	28	20



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Family satisfaction survey results

In August 2015, MAIER implemented the Family Survey. This survey focuses on a family's satisfaction with their child's participation in the Early Start Denver Model. Families have the option of an electronic or paper version of the survey. Survey results are anonymous. For families choosing the paper version of the survey, a SASE is provided for anonymity.

Of the 27 families who have exited the ESDM services, 18 were eligible to participate in the survey. The other 11 families exited the program prior to the implementation of the survey. Of those 18 families, 12 have completed the optional survey. 100% of these 12 families indicated agreement and strong agreement with the progress and developmental growth of their child when participating in ESDM intervention. Below are open-ended responses from the family surveys. Contact MAIER for more information.

Imported from the electronic survey:

Text Response

This is a wonderful model and was very beneficial to our daughters growth and development. It's almost scary to think about where she would be today if she hadn't been fortunate enough to receive these services. It truly made a difference. I wish nothing but success for this program and all the future kids you will be helping.

I wish there was more connection and communication between CDS and the school systems for when children leave the ESDM model to go to schooling programs. We were always being told new additions to information once both sides heard one another's. great model, very helpful

My son had many issues with social interaction and with language. In the year I was in the program he made a lot of positive progress now playtime is very enjoyable and he goes to preschool where he has made new friends.

I wish our ESDM provider would move to live with us, she made the life soooo easy.

We couldn't be more thankful. Our son has learned so much and we can see just how PROUD he is of himself with these newly acquired skills. We'd love him no matter what, but there's a new joy in his eyes that makes our hearts melt.

This helped open up my child in so many areas that weren't open to him before and they helped us learn and modify things to help him learn. This is a wonderful program and I'm happy with the results we got from this.

Data sources to determine child progress and developmental growth are used including entrance and exit Battelle Developmental Inventory, the ESDM curriculum assessment, and parent report. The MAIER team is currently exploring other tools that are more sensitive to the showing growth for the characteristics of autism.